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S. PAUL OF THE CROSS



THE LIFE
OF
S. PAUL OF THE CROSS

Founder of the
CONGREGATION OF DISCALCED CLERKS OF THE
HOLY CROSS AND PASSION OF OUR LORD
USUALLY CALLED
PASSIONISTS

BY
THE REV. FATHER PIUS A SP. SANCTO
PASSIONIST

NEW AND REVISED EDITION

LONDON: SANDS & CO.
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1924

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TO
THE VERY REVEREND
FATHER EUGENE OF S. ANTHONY,
PASSIONIST.

The Patriarch of our Province,
WHO LIVED WITH THE CONTEMPORARIES OF S. PAUL OF THE CROSS,
AND IS, THEREFORE, THE LIVING LINK BETWEEN US AND
OUR HOLY FOUNDER,

THE FOLLOWING ATTEMPT AT DELINEATING THE SANCTITY AND
LABOURS OF OUR FOUNDER

The Oracle of our Traditions, and the Exponent of our True Spirit,
IS AFFECTIONATELY AND REVERENTLY
INSCRIBED.



PREFACE

THE lives of saints are great sermons. They preach the Gospel by their deeds, and their preaching is perpetuated by their history. The note of sanctity in the Church gets its fullest expression in their characters, and the attraction of their various spirits is often the occasion of their reproduction.

A philosophical reader of a saint's life looks for three things in the book before him : he wants to see the personal sanctity of the subject, its effects, and its imitableness.

The life of Saint Paul of the Cross presents these three aspects in a striking manner ; for, although it may have defects in the narrative, the events narrated cannot be injured by them. His personal sanctity was of the highest order, for his was a long life of heroic self-abnegation, blessed with the choicest favours of Heaven ; and yet, when we examine it closely, it fits together so admirably, that no single feature could be omitted from the picture without destroying his true likeness. It was a life of consistency from beginning to end ; it had no fits or starts, no glaring events, no extraordinary changes ; and even its most wonderful manifestations were nothing but what might be expected

from what went before. It was supremely simple. He loved his crucified Lord, and resolved to be as like Him as he could. This thought never left him ; it sent him to the secret scenes of his infant mortifications, it guided him through his boyish fervour, it animated him in the pulpit, it inspired him in the confessional, it illumined him in his direction, it consoled and comforted him in his death. When friends deserted or betrayed him, he thought of Our Lord in the garden ; when enemies slandered him, he remembered the hall of Pilate ; when he was oppressed with pains of body and desolation of mind, he repeated the words which were heard on Calvary. This was a very simple sort of sanctity, to live always under the shadow of the Cross.

Its effects were marvellous, whichever way we may look at them,—whether we count them by the multitudes he converted on his missions, by the spiritual children he begot, or by the contribution they gave to the ever-living sanctity of the Church. These shall be abundantly seen in the course of the history ; but we feel called upon, before entering on it, to reply to a sort of challenge which has recently been sent into the world by a respectable periodical, and copied into many journals, as if it were unanswerable.

The gift of miracles has never ceased to show its presence in the Church. The fact that saints are canonized proves this ; for it is known that this solemn

declaration cannot take place unless it be warranted by such a Divine evidence of the holiness of those whom the Church honours on her altars. Saint Paul of the Cross wrought stupendous miracles—not only in Italy, and not only in his lifetime, but in England, in Ireland, and in America, even in our own days.

The challenge we allude to appeared in a recent number of the *Dublin University Magazine*, a publication anything but favourable to Catholics or saints. It is as follows:—

“ We find in the Bible that there is a close connection between the actual development of the spiritual and the subjugation of the corporeal life and the working of miracles. All the prophets led that life ; they were given to prayer, fasting, and solitude. It was the peculiar life of Jesus ; He retired to the mountains, the deserts, and the by-places for prayer, and He attributed the miraculous power to the results of this life. Is it, then, possible for a man, by strong faith, accompanied by fasting and prayer, in these latter days, to regain that close mysterious communion with his Maker which should give him a supernatural power ? We reply that we have not the means of answering the question, for the simple reason that we never have an opportunity of seeing it tried. Without wishing to insinuate anything invidious, have we any record in ecclesiastical or other history of bishops, priests, or men of any class, during the last four hundred years,

spending whole nights in prayer, or consecutive days in fasting, such as we read, upon reputable authority, was the practice in the olden times of the Prophets, and in later times of men who devoted their lives to the imitation of Christ? There are plenty of hints scattered throughout the Bible and Testament that there is a mysterious connection yet to be recovered between man and God, if men will only fulfil the required condition; and we repeat that it is not in our power to estimate the results of such a life as we have mentioned—a life of spiritual discipline, of development of the soul and subjugation of the body, because we have no examples around us; but we ask, if such life were pursued, what is there to prevent our believing that, to some extent, the words of our Divine Master, who led that life Himself, would yet be verified, and ‘this sort’ would still ‘go out through fasting and prayer’?”

We give the extract in full—for it is very remarkable,—and see that one great fault runs through the whole of it. It seems to make the working of miracles quite a natural affair, which follows as a necessary consequence from much fasting and prayer. Now, the working of miracles is an attestation—as we know from the very texts of the Gospel which promise that power to the saints—both of the sanctity of the worker and of the truth of the doctrines which he inculcates. “If you will not believe Me,” said Our Lord to the Jews,

“believe the works which I do.” Men may fast and pray like a dervish without the right faith, and they shall never work miracles. Nor will the faith which is insinuated in the extract do. It must be the true faith.

Leaving that much of the subject aside, we come to the challenges. The writer cannot prove his theory, because he sees no examples around him—no, not even for four hundred years. Now this shows an amount of ignorance or prejudice quite astonishing in a writer whom we should expect to be exempt from them. Has he read the lives of none of our later saints? Did he not see there fasting, prayer, and miracles? If not, let him, and others like him, read this, and then ask where are examples to be found. We Catholics are not quite idiots or knaves, much as people may be inclined to think us such; and we are very far from coining prodigies, and attributing them to saints. This we should consider a species of blasphemous imposture highly deserving of the galleys. We do not hesitate, then, to aver that the facts narrated in this volume rest upon the highest order of human testimony, and that special care has been taken to omit everything which did not; although probabilities may lawfully find room in a history.

The Saint whose life is here recorded fasted, and prayed, and wrought miracles, and he lived within the last four hundred years, for he is not yet a hun-

dred years dead. The depositions from which this history is composed were taken down before proper tribunals, and upon oath, about two years after his death; they were attested not only by two or three, but in a great many cases by more than a score of witnesses; and if they do not succeed in eliciting at least human credibility in their favour, we do not see what can.

The wonders which fidelity to our materials has compelled us to record will strike many as reasons for rendering our holy Founder inimitable. Now, this is a great mistake. His uniform course of life is very easily copied; even his austerities do not move us to doubt this, seeing that they were guided by a prudence which suited them to his strength. Who is there who cannot think, and who is there who, thinking on the Passion, cannot love? And who can love Our Lord and not be zealous for His glory? What more did Saint Paul of the Cross do? Nothing. In kind, we all can copy his sanctity; in degree, we may indeed fall short of it; but there is no reason *à priori* why we should. We have hearts as he had, opportunities as he had; and it is certainly our own fault if we be not imitators of him as he was of Christ Jesus.

There have been several lives of the Saint already published; and a reason ought to be assigned for this new one. The reason is not far to seek. He has just been canonized, and the examinations preliminary

to this great step have discovered several matters never published. The Roman archives have been carefully searched ; every scrap of information which they afforded has been rigidly examined ; and a stay in Rome, and conferences with the Fathers there, have put us in the way of furnishing a more complete history of the Saint than has ever appeared. He belonged up to this time to his own children and a few other privileged countries ; he belongs now to the Universal Church ; and it is but meet that a full account of him should go forth to keep company with his spreading veneration.

S. JOSEPH'S RETREAT, HIGHGATE, LONDON, N.,
Feast of S. Mary Madgalen, 1867.

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THE LIFE OF SAINT PAUL OF THE CROSS.

CHAPTER I

HIS BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

“**B**E ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect, is the great counsel of our Lord. It is neither a strict command nor a mere recommendation ; but it partakes so much of the sweetness of an invitation, that it puts on the aspect of a commandment by the force with which it draws fervent souls into its practice. The lives of the Saints present us with instances of the variety of ways in which it may be observed. Some pass their youth in frivolity or sin, and, at a turning point of their ways, commence a course of life which very soon obliterates the past, and places them beyond the reach of admiration. Others seem perfect from their very birth. They live and act as if original sin had never warped their energies ; because the grace of Baptism is so fostered in them, that it grows strong enough to crush imperceptibly the risings of the inferior passions which are always left in the soul after the stain of our birth-right has been washed away. These favoured souls are always saints ; and their efforts to conceal the graces

with which their souls are enriched, only bring their sanctity into greater prominence.

S. Paul of the Cross was one of this latter class of saints, he was a saint from the very day of his baptism until his death. Proofs, natural and supernatural, of this great fact so abound in his life, that the difficulty before us consists more in choosing than in recording them. When we have looked dispassionately at the events of his long and holy life, we shall arrive at the conclusion that he observed the precept of being perfect with singular exactness.

The circumstances of his family would have little to do with his sanctity, if this began to be dated after he had left his father's house ; but they have a great deal to do with it as the case stands. The father of S. Paul was Luca Danei, a native of Castellazzo, a small town on the confines of Lombardy, about four miles distant from the city of Alessandria. The constant succession of political changes, which shuffled the dukedoms and principalities of northern Italy from one domination to another, were not without their effect upon the subjects who had so often to make fealty to new masters, or forfeit their rights if they hesitated as to the justice or propriety of doing so. History being mainly occupied with the moving springs of governments, seldom deigns to visit the homes of those who are far removed from court intrigues, and fail to push themselves into notice either by genius or notoriety. It would be a wise thing, however, if historians would look into the ways of a people and see how great political changes affected their welfare. Hagiographers, in every age, and secular biographers too, have in a great measure supplied this defect. They have

given us pictures of the homes in which their heroes were brought up, and the only thing we have to regret in such accounts is the want of a warranty to extend the picture to a greater number of cases. Modern fiction puts characters forth as types of a class, but dogged history, dealing as it does with facts, cannot generalize after this fashion.

In the family of the Danei we have certainly the model of a Christian household, and the childhood of S. Paul tells us how far it was copied. Luca Danei could trace his genealogy up to a noble Decurion of Alessandria, who flourished in the fourteenth century ; but the little scrap of territory which confiscations and wars had left him, and a good deal of shrewd common sense, disposed him to change his nobility and poverty for the life of a business man, with its attendant profits. What the business was in which he engaged historians do not tell us. When he had gathered a few comforts around him, and felt that he could begin life, he married a respectable lady, named Donna Anna Maria Massari, whose parents lived in Roveriolo, near Genoa.

The commencement of their married life was soon destined to have its peace ruffled. In 1693, the war between Louis XIV. and his leagued opponents of Germans, Spaniards and Piedmontese, raged through Piedmont and Monferrato. Luca Danei and his bride left the dangerous vicinity of Castellazzo, and went to live in the pretty village of Ovada, which was subject to the Genoese. It was here, in a humble dwelling, since converted into a chapel, and the object of the veneration of the surrounding people, our saint was born on the night of the 3rd January, 1694.

He was baptized on the 6th of the same month with the names of Paul Francis. The historians of his life, beginning with the Ven. Vincent Strambi, give us many particulars of the presages which accompanied his entrance into the world. We are told that his mother experienced sensations of supernatural pleasure and delight during the pregnancy of this favoured child, and that the chamber in which he was born shone with a brilliancy which for a short time obscured the lamps and dazzled those who were present. These signs were not unworthy of his future course, and are like those which are told of the birth of many other great servants of God. There also appeared a contra-sign, if we may so speak, at the same time. The year 1694 was signalized by another event, and one which the world ought not to forget. The principles of worldliness saw their hero born in this year, in the person of Voltaire, who carried the denial of everything for which our Saint was remarkable to such extremes that he at last recoiled upon himself. It is difficult to lay down any rules for judging of the influence of childhood on after life. Voltaire received an excellent education under the Jesuits, but that did not restrain him from being carried away by his weird hatred and withering scorn against everything which pertained to religion or its priests. *Corruptio optimi pessima*; and this corruption may as often arise from the circumstances in which a boy is placed when out of school, as from his own innate propensity to evil. One thing is certain, that without a holy training it is difficult to have a holy youth. We may venture to say also that although it be possible to surfeit a youth with religious exercises, this more frequently happens from the want of tact in

instructors than from any capability in holy things to surcharge the soul.

The childhood of S. Paul had everything in it which could mould a future saint. His parents, pious and simple, were content with their lot, and had rather see their children free from sin than raised to honours and riches. The father read the lives of the Saints to his children, and perpetually cautioned them against two things, gambling and the bearing of arms. The mother took great care to make them admire the beauty of modesty. She kept them away from society until they were grown up, and had them all instructed in their catechism first, and in whatever else suited them afterwards. One instance of the perfect spirit of religion with which her instructions were animated is given by S. Paul's biographers, when they tell us that if the child began to cry or felt aggrieved at anything, she always pacified him by giving him a crucifix, and saying something about the figure represented on it.

It is very refreshing to go back in spirit to this holy household—the father and mother models of virtue, and the children so fervent that they were obliged to be watched lest they might injure their health by the severity of their penances or the length of their prayers. The mother of sixteen children must sometimes have a great deal to put up with from their infant clamours and puerile wishes. Donna Anna had her failings, like all other matrons, but we are told by her son that her most angry exclamation was: “May the Lord make saints of you all.” She used also to amuse her children by reciting for them the quaint stories about the Fathers of the desert, which are to be found in the old chronicles of their lives.

In this we see the peculiar working of that Catholic spirit which seldom gets full play in the education of children. Children must be amused, and their tastes can be formed, almost together, by the tenor of their amusements. Paul and his brother John Baptist, used to play at little altars and little vestments and little ceremonies, like what they saw in the church. The stories which they heard were about saints, the books put into their hands treated of saints, their father and mother lived like saints. In a word, sanctity was inculcated upon them by every avenue which opens young minds to knowledge. All this was done unconsciously. Luca Danei and his wife did not discipline themselves into this life by dint of rules. No ; that would make everything strained and unnatural, and it would end by crippling the spiritual advancement of their children instead of helping it to expand gracefully and luxuriantly into genuine sanctity.

It is, perhaps, in the training of youth, that the Catholic doctrine of veneration for the saints shows its greatest power. Children must imitate and be led by imitation into enthusiasm as well as into the ordinary duties of their state. It is a great point gained, therefore, if the models, which are proposed to them, be worthy of imitation. They become ambitious of excelling in that particular line of glory which they first admire, and if after experience and study only make this line the more praiseworthy one sees no alternative except going straight to the goal, or throwing it up with a bad conscience. Add to this the hunger which children have for the marvellous. They can listen without tiring to stories of ghosts, fairies, giants, and witches, and even when they come to that time of life when they think it right to laugh at them, they can still

relish an extravagant tale. The legends and the miracles of the saints give this instinct in children a beautiful development heavenward. The little minds in Catholic countries begin to relish sanctity, much as those of other countries gape after knight-errantry. When sober judgment, and the additional light of faith, show them that to follow in the footsteps of the saints, so far from being Quixotic, is in reality the business of their lives, they run on with wonderful alacrity in the way of holiness. There is this difference, however, between the amateur saint and the real one, that the former soon gets tired of saints' ways and the latter perseveres in finding new incentives to pursue the great life he has begun.

This natural way of accounting for a Catholic child's bent towards heroic sanctity, is not meant to detract in the least from the working of grace: on the contrary, it is meant to show the intimate connexion which there is between grace and nature. People are too apt to suppose that grace takes a young saint by the hand, all at once, and lifts him up on a candlestick, where he may shine and be wondered at for ever after. That is not the case. Saints make use of every natural opportunity which is offered them, and it is by the good use of those very opportunities that they make their measure of grace to multiply. We have only the following two incidents recorded of the saint's childhood.

Paul and his brother John Baptist, when mere children, narrowly escaped being drowned. They fell into the river Tanaro one day, and nobody was by to rescue them. A beautiful lady, who, it is believed, was the Queen of Heaven herself, extended her gracious hand, took the children out of the water, waited till they saw her, and

then disappeared. Their devotion to the Mother of God received a new impetus by this incident, and went on, like all their other good qualities, growing in proportion to their years until the end of their lives. Another day little Paul was in danger of being bitten by a dog which was barking furiously at his heels, when he screamed out, "Jesus!" and the dog suddenly stopped. The name one utters in a fright, as if calling for assistance, or as if to give a last cry of despair, is the nearest to the heart : and if we are loth to grant the sacred Name, which could raise the dead, power to stop the ferocity of a brute, we can at least see what the habitual thoughts of Paul were when quite a child.

CHAPTER II

HIS YOUTH

PAUL was sent, at the age of ten, to be educated by a good priest in Cremolino. Here he stayed for five years, and learned the usual subjects which boys of his age, in those days, were supposed to know; namely, reading and writing, together with the rudiments of the Italian and Latin languages. When peace was restored between the belligerents in 1709, and the Duke of Savoy was put in possession of Castellazzo, Luca Danei returned to his native city, and brought his children, Paul included, with him.

Paul is now fifteen years of age. He has led an angelic life up to this period, as he was always a model pupil at school, and a model son at home. We are prepared therefore to expect great holiness of life as the fruit of his training and excellent dispositions; but scarcely the extraordinary strides he made in the way of perfection. He one day heard a homely discourse from his parish priest, and it occurred to him that he had not corresponded sufficiently with the graces he had hitherto received. He made then a general confession, with such compunction that the priest feared he would burst a blood-vessel, such was the excess of his contrition. All at once, he entered on a life of great austerity. He slept little, and that little was taken upon the bare boards or floor, with a stone or a few bricks for a pillow. He

would rise from this couch, in the middle of the night, and betake himself to prayer, in which he spent seven hours generally every day. His brother, John Baptist, was his constant companion in all his mortifications. Here is an instance of the charm which holiness has for youth, if they can be brought to love it. These two brothers, at the ages of fifteen and thirteen respectively, vied with the ancient anchorets in their mode of life. The dawning upon their young minds of the pleasures and hopes, which a deceptive world holds out to talent and probity, was to them but the opening of a brighter vista which they were resolved to reach by self-abnegation. The youths did all in their power to conceal the severity with which they treated their bodies. They retired to a granary, where the sound of the discipline might not be heard by the members of their family ; but something took their father, at an unexpected moment, to this calvary, and thus their penance was discovered ; he ran to stop them, fearing they might kill themselves. The curiosity of a sister found out that they lay not on their beds, and also that Paul used furtively to season his meals on a Friday with gall, in memory of the bitter draught which his Saviour was offered in His sufferings. Far from pooh-poohing this saint-like fervour, or prohibiting it altogether, their father and mother wept for joy at seeing the effect of their good instructions, and revered the holiness of their children whilst they endeavoured to see that their youthful piety did not carry them to any excess, which might impair their health.

Paul organised a little society of the youths of the town, and it was their custom to assemble at stated times to

while away their leisure in the reading of good books, or in sweet and cheerful conversation about the heroic actions of the Saints. John Baptist, Paul's brother, was the first who joined him in this holy undertaking. The instructions of Paul had their reward. Of the youths who thus assembled under his direction, and in his company, six became Servites, and many others became Augustinians and Capuchins. Paul and John Baptist still remained in their father's house, unconscious of the future which was in store for them, and feeling no special call to join themselves to any existing order in the Church. The work of Paul was also found in the bosom of his own family. He used to collect his brothers and sisters together at stated times, and they heard his instructions as they would the very words of inspiration. Such a life must diffuse a holiness all around it, when we recollect the aptitude there was in his good and simple neighbours for things of God. His companions shared, in a great measure, his fortitude also. One of them was once tempted by an abandoned woman, and he answered her by seizing a bunch of brambles and trouncing her soundly into a sense of her infamous conduct. In fact, everybody looked upon Paul as a Saint, and when he passed by one could hear them say, "There's the Saint."

Youthful piety is exposed to the danger of vanity. When we see holiness and mortification under grey hairs and a weight of years we reverence it indeed, but do not think it anything wonderful. But when all the tokens of exalted sanctity are coupled with the freshness and bloom of youth, we either refuse to accept them as genuine, or give an unmeasured amount of praise to their possessor. Paul does not seem to have been tried

much by suspicion at this time of life. It came afterwards. Every one praised and loved him. His long hours of unmoved and absorbing devotion before the blessed Sacrament in his parish church, made people inquire after him and recommend themselves to his prayers. Such was the intensity of his devotion, that, when a bench fell upon his foot once, and so crushed it that the blood flowed upon the pavement, he remained still in the same position and did not so much as wince under the pain he must have had to endure. When his prayer was over some one told him to look to the wound. "These are but roses," said the holy youth; "Jesus Christ has suffered more than this, and I deserve worse for my sins." It was usually said by those who knew Paul that if you wished to see him you had better go to the church.

Such was the estimation in which he was held by his acquaintances and neighbours. They little knew what were his own sentiments. Whilst those who were edified by his composure, fancied he enjoyed an incipient paradise, he was tormented with doubts, scruples, and temptations. He was pressed with horrid images, with doubts about the truths of faith, and disturbed by uncertainty with regard to the state of his conscience. He knew not where to go from this array of evil thoughts which assailed him, and it was only whilst buried in prayer before his Lord in the Holy Sacrament that he felt himself strong enough to hold his own against the enemy. This state of mind lasted a long time, and especially troubled him at the period of which we are writing; so that he had not even time to think of a complacent thought. To add to all this interior desolation, his confessor treated him with apparent harshness. This priest would keep Paul kneel-

ing nearly all day at his confessional, and refused to hear him until everyone else had done. He would then call him, shout at him, and scold him severely for every peccadillo—as if he had been guilty of murder. If he passed by, when the youth had his face covered with his cloak in the church, in order to hide his tears or emotions, he generally pulled away the cloak and said aloud, “Is that the way to behave in church, eh?” Another time he passed him by at the communion rail as if he had been a notorious sinner. Betimes it would occur to poor Paul that the confessor was imprudent, and that it would be better to go to confession to another priest, but he corrected himself with “No, this is the confessor for me, he makes me bow down my head.” God and His minister tried the holy youth by those severe tests which search to the very marrow of the bones. It is a very wretched thing to be praised and loved by the world, when God and those to whom our interior is known seem to repel us—when the very regard we value is denied us, and the honours we fear are cast upon us. To such a sensitive soul as Paul’s this must have been excruciating. It was thus he lived from fifteen to twenty-one, doing those things which lay within his reach, fulfilling his duty as a son, edifying his neighbours and sanctifying himself and his acquaintances. It is this consistent course of piety which makes his life up to this period be so scanty in incidents of any kind. Every little trifle bearing slightly upon his life is treasured up by his different biographers; but as they could only retard us in our anxiety to come at something more interesting, and throw no additional light upon his character or sanctity, we omit a few of them.

CHAPTER III

HIS ADVENTURES

IN the year 1714 a war broke out between the Republic of Venice and the Turks. The Sultan, Acmet III., disregarding the treaty of Carlowitz, poured a formidable army into the Peloponnesus. The Venetians tried to raise troops to oppose the march of the Crescent, and Clement XI., who then sat in the chair of Peter, lent his aid, not only by money and arms, but by an appeal to Christendom, ordering public prayers and fasts, and calling upon the faithful to oppose this attack upon Christianity. Paul Danei heard the appeal, and thought an opportunity occurred of giving his life for the faith. He did not as yet know what was his vocation, and perhaps the indistinct manifestations of God's will, which pointed to his command of spiritual soldiers, made him imagine, like S. Francis of Assisi, that this was the call. He stole away from home then, at the age of twenty-one, and went to Crema, in Lombardy, where he got enrolled as a volunteer, in an army which was to march to Venice in a few days, and thence to sail to the seat of war.

Whether it was that a soldier's life did not suit him, or that he was disgusted with the licence and ribaldry which he saw around him, or that he could not properly attend to his religious duties, we have no means of knowing ; but we know that before he was a full year a soldier, he went

to pray before the Blessed Sacrament, which was exposed for the forty hours in the town in which his regiment then was ; and after praying for some time there, he left the church, persuaded that he had taken a wrong course. He went to his commanding officer, obtained his discharge, and returned home.

This apparent freak looks so odd, that it is with difficulty one can account for it. Paul was so serious, so considerate, so careful and obedient to his parents, that this soldiering adventure calls for explanation. His father used to caution his children against gambling or taking up arms ; and we must suppose Paul would never counteract such a counsel, if he did not see great reasons for doing so. He did not go to seek for glory or riches. These he despised thoroughly, as may be seen from an incident which occurred on his return. Weary and footsore, he called at a house on the wayside, and asked for hospitality. He was kindly received and handsomely treated, by a childless pair advanced in years. They were struck by his noble mien, and the charm of his conversation, and, after putting their heads together, resolved to adopt him as their son, and make him heir to their patrimony. Paul thanked them, but refused their proffered blessings with a smile, and, bidding them good bye, resumed his journey to Castellazzo. Riches, therefore, could not have been his object. He might naturally expect some harsh comments on his adventures when he returned to his native place ; and here was an opportunity offered whereby he could avoid them all. We must conclude, for the want of any apparent key to the unlocking of this mystery, that he heard the first sounds of his subsequent call in the Church at Crema ;

for his conduct henceforward seems shaped in accordance with such a hypothesis.

On reaching home another adventure awaited him. His uncle, the Rev. Christopher Danei, arranged a very suitable marriage for his good nephew. The lady was young, handsome, of a respectable family, and had a large dowry. In order that everything might be smoothed down to the very consent of Paul, the uncle made him his heir. The parents of our Saint were also very anxious for the match. Pressed on all sides, he did not like to disobey, nor to disclose his future designs at this early stage of their adoption. He agreed to pay the young lady a visit. He did so ; but, what with blushing and the confusion of ideas consequent on such a novel situation, he never once raised his eyes to look at her, said a few incoherent words, miles away from the point, and did not so much as allude to the object of his visit. He left the house in a greater hurry than he came, and went off to the church, to pray for the confirmation of his good resolutions. The lady was not at all offended ; on the contrary, she seems to have taken quite a fancy to him. She went, accompanied by her servant, next day to return the visit. They were told that Paul was in the church, and they went off there to find him. They sat down near where he was kneeling, and the young lady went on in a tone which he could hear, talking to her maid, " How can he continue kneeling so long ? Must he not perish with the cold ? Is it possible ? Can he live long if he goes on like that ? " It was all to no purpose ; Paul did not even turn round to tell her not to be talking in the church. She and the servant went home with very little hopes of making an impression upon the

Saint. Still Paul was not free from trouble ; the interest of his family, the designs of an uncle whom he respected very much, the solicitations of his friends, and his own state of aridity, combined to give him very little peace. However, the uncle was the chief cause of his disquiet. He could easily dispose of every argument, except one coming from that quarter. All he could do was to go to the church, and pray that God might enlighten him. In a few days his uncle died, and all the causes of his interior trouble were removed at once. To Paul the property was consigned by will, but without any conditions, although it was the prospect of his marriage which disposed his relative to make him his legatee. We must not be surprised at this. Paul did not seem to be preparing for the ecclesiastical state. He was studying by himself, and spending long hours in prayer ; but his companions, one after another, went off to join various religious orders, whilst he remained still at home. He did not see clearly what were God's designs in his regard, and it was quite natural that his friends should endeavour to see him settled in the state of life to which everybody seems to be called, whom God does not call to a higher. The time now came for some manifestation of Paul's will. Whatever his notions were, he had kept them to himself ; because he very likely judged it best that his confessor was quite sufficient as a confidant. Many great works are frustrated by young people taking all their friends into their confidence, before their intentions are ripe for being acted upon ; and if Paul took all prudential measures against his intentions being nullified, he deserves to be applauded.

A goodly property now falling into his hands, he must

take some decisive steps as to the uses to which he should convert it. What would that be? Conjectures, to be sure, were busy in prognosticating the issue. Paul was called to the reading of the will, and when it was over, he quietly renounced the whole into the hands of the Vicar Forane, and looking at a crucifix, exclaimed, " My crucified Lord, I protest that of this property I shall take no more than this breviary. For Thou alone, O Lord, art sufficient for me."

Let us reflect a moment upon the scene before us. Here is a young man about twenty-three years of age, beloved and honoured by all his acquaintances. He has within the last three years gone through more incidents than fell to the whole of his previous life. The world has wooed him to itself in ways which it rarely does his equals. With a subtlety as remarkable as it was unsuccessful did the temptations come. The weight of his affections for his parents and his anguish at the difficulties they had to endure, inclined him to relieve their necessities by an honourable alliance. The authority of a holy priest backed those arguments. At length he might have done all without linking himself to the world. He might have put aside the property which was left him, as a provision for future necessities, he might have distributed it in charity, or enriched his parents with it. He might have done anything at all with it, all on grounds of prudence and earthly wisdom, but the one thing of leaving it there, and let who might look after it. This was the one thing Paul did. He left all things.

If we look at the sacrifice from another side, it will strike us as the more remarkable. We should not advise a man to give up everything, no matter how great his

detachment from the world, unless we saw some determination of entering a religious order. To make oneself poor in an instant, without the least earthly prospect of sustenance, and to have to bear the rebukes and sage advices of friends as well as their contempt for such an unusual proceeding, is an action which is seldom witnessed even in the lives of the Saints. S. Francis of Assisi and Blessed Benedict Labré were the two most remarkable for this perfect poverty ; and between them another does not occur so remarkable as S. Paul of the Cross.

The resolution which Paul took now was to serve his crucified Master, first by entire self-abnegation, and then by remaining in the condition of a simple layman, so as to occupy his time in instructing the ignorant, destroying vice, and promoting virtue as far as he could. He had been for some years a member of the confraternity of S. Anthony, which had its oratory near his father's house. Paul went there regularly every Sunday to teach catechism to the children. He was to be found in all works of charity, and vied with holy Tobias in his attentions to the burial of the dead. It was remarked by all that Paul spoke with an extraordinary unction, especially about the Passion of our Lord. The confraternity elected him their prior, although he seems to have been the youngest member of it ; and wonderful were the effects of the exhortations which his office obliged him to give. One young man was so moved by a few remarks, which our Saint delivered over a corpse which was just being consigned to sepulture, that he left the world and went to spend his days in the cloister. Besides this power of speech, God gave him extraordinary graces. He per-

ceived a stench from souls infected with the sin of impurity, and would often walk up to a friend and say, "Brother, you have committed such a sin, go to confession at once."

Two or three remarkable instances in which sinners refused to listen to his advice, and met with death in a few days, gave the servant of God wonderful influence over the youth of the town. They beheld him with a mixture of awe and reverence. Bad conversations were dropped whenever he appeared, and an abuse which priests and missionaries had preached against in vain for a number of years, was put a stop to by a few words from our young Saint. This was the custom which the young men had of going about singing and serenading by moonlight.

The last incident which we have to record in this chapter of adventures is what happened with regard to two French women who came to Castellazzo. They were both friendless, and as far as we can guess from the accounts given, even of bad life ; they were also infected with heresy. Paul brought them to his father's house, had them lodged there, and succeeded in converting one of them from heresy, whom he afterwards sent to a convent in the town to atone by penance for her past misdeeds. Everybody was surprised at this proceeding, just as the Apostles were surprised at finding our Lord speaking to the Samaritan, because Paul was scarcely ever known to speak to a female.

We have tried to recount the events of his life until the age of twenty-five in the preceding chapters ; we must now change our manner of history, for the changes of his interior will become more the subject of our thoughts

than the exterior acts in which these changes were made evident. At the same time a host of exterior actions will not be wanting as the history proceeds.

We should not be satisfied with our fidelity if we omitted a singular event recorded by his biographers. It was the time of carnival, when *semel in anno licet insanire* is the maxim acted upon in all the towns of Italy. An excellent gentleman of the town had an innocent entertainment arranged, where the youths of both sexes could disport themselves under his eye, and thus avoid the dangers which the loose rein of custom exposed them to. Paul was passing to the church, and his confessor saw him. He called him, and told him to go to the party and amuse himself ; scarcely arrived, he was heartily welcomed, and asked by the gentleman to lead the first dance. He hesitated a moment ; but, judging that it was not in itself a sin, and that his confessor had a right to his obedience, and the gentleman a claim on his compliance, he selected a partner, and was just going to commence, when, to the surprise of all, the musicians stopped, looked at their instruments, and found the strings broken. This interposition of Providence showed the priest that Paul was a chosen vessel. He henceforward venerated his penitent, and advised him to choose a confessor more enlightened than himself.

CHAPTER IV

HIS VOCATION

THERE are many mansions in Our Father's house, and many ways of becoming entitled to inhabit them. There is nothing so striking in the Church as the variety of vocations in which all may be assured that Heaven may be gained by fidelity to what is required in them. The question of vocation itself may require a few words of explanation. It is recognized as a fatal mistake in the spiritual life for any one to embrace a system of life beyond that of the ordinary good Christian, without a special call. There is the fundamental law of the commandments laid down for all, and beyond these one ought not to go without a special assurance that such is God's good pleasure. The consciousness of being intended by God for the more perfect life of the Counsels is called a religious vocation. Some would lay it down that there is such a thing as a vocation to every pursuit of life, and the failure of a man in any one line is commented upon with a remark that "he had missed his vocation." Certainly, every one has aptitude for some special calling, and if circumstances allow him to follow the bent of his genius, his course of life is likely to run on more smoothly, or, at all events, with greater satisfaction to himself than if he has to take up a forced life for which he feels no inclination. It is easy to know when one is in his vocation. He takes an interest in

whatever belongs to it, can spend days, with no other result than the gratification of the employment itself, in the most abstruse calculations or hard plodding labours. It is the Eureka repeated. Whatever truth there may be in vocations to various earthly pursuits—and there is a good deal—it must be confessed that there is much more in the ratio of heavenly pursuits.

Our Divine Lord says: "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you;" and it is singular that some of those who offered themselves to Him for disciples were refused, whereas those who were busy in their natural callings, were summoned by Him to leave all and follow Him. S. Paul says also, "Let no one assume this honour to himself except he be called as Aaron was." There is, therefore, such a thing as a divine call, and there is a threat of punishment hanging over those who enter the sanctuary or the religious state without it. Its necessity is admitted; but its discovery is extremely difficult. When our Lord spoke, it was impossible to mistake the prudence of listening and following; but now, His voice is seldom heard, and our unenlightened minds are apt to confound it with our own inclinations. It is unnecessary to digress so far from our subject as to enter into a dissertation on the signs of vocation; we shall only remark that there is never a vocation without its accompanying signs, and that it requires the discretion of a very wise and holy director to discover their genuineness.

S. Paul, as we have seen, had arrived at the age of twenty-five before he distinctly saw what manner of life it was to which God had called him. Every species of a devout life had presented itself to him during the course of his pious exercises. His companions had ranged them-

selves long ago under different standards, and there was Paul still pursuing his ordinary avocations, and increasing instead of abating his austerities. When his confessor, to whom it seems he had made a vow of obedience, ordered him to place himself under the direction of another guide, he obeyed him, and chose for confessor a Capuchin, called Father Jerome of Tortona, who lived in his own town. This holy man perceived at once that his new penitent was no ordinary soul, that God had placed in him a treasure of grace, and must consequently have destined him for something great. He allowed him to go to communion daily, and Paul, to conceal this great privilege, used to go to a different church each day, and liked most those which were least frequented. At this time our Saint had reached the highest degree of contemplative prayer, and was endowed with many of the graces called *gratis datæ*. Father Jerome, after he had acquired a thorough knowledge of Paul's interior, wished him to go and confer with a great servant of God, also a Capuchin, named F. Columban of Genoa, who lived in the convent of his order at Ovada (Paul's birthplace) at the time. Our Saint used to walk twenty miles, and that very often, in order to obey one director and consult another. F. Columban was the first who understood the extraordinary ways by which God was pleased to lead His servant. It was perceptible that some great work was in store for him ; but what that might be, neither himself nor his spiritual child could plainly discern.

In one of these pilgrimages, as Paul was passing near Sestri, he observed a small oratory in the wild mountain-side, which was dedicated to our Lady. He raised his eyes to this sanctuary, and, in the tenderness of his

devotion, felt an irresistible impulse to abandon country, parents, everything, and retire there to lead a penitential life. This was the first idea of his vocation. It came upon him with a force which would have driven him into its instant adoption, if motives of prudence did not induce him to defer it. By degrees this notion grew weaker, and left in his mind nothing but a vague hankering after solitude and silence ; it then took shape, and he seemed realizing it in a black coarse habit, in some indefinite waste. The days of the Thebaid were gone by. Hermits had learnt to live closer together under the rule of S. Augustine, or S. Bruno, than they did under the guidance of S. Pachomius. It was an anachronism in the Church, to bring back an organized regular life to its primitive germs ; as well might a man try to crumble the oak, leaves, branches and trunk, down to the acorn from which it had sprung. The rough outline of penance and solitude which was being drawn by the hand of God upon Paul's mind, had yet to be developed and finished by the touches of his heavenly master. The next stroke added to his aspirations was a vehement drawing to missionary work, which is described in his own words :—" A leading, all-absorbing idea of moving souls with the fear of God." It would flash across his mind now, that he should collect companions and carry out in concert with them those works for God which his zeal prompted him to ; it would occur to him, again, that he was but a wretched sinner, unworthy to live, and how could he presume to be guide or director to any one ? He told all these things to his spiritual directors, and they saw in them a heavenly commission, and told him to bide his time until the mist by which they were surrounded cleared away.

On the 16th of April, 1719, Paul received the Sacrament of Confirmation. This rite should have been administered sooner ; but the Bishop had not been to his parish since 1709, and Paul was away at school in Cremolino then. Shortly after this he saw many times, in visions, scourge with "*love*" written upon each of its thongs. The scourge was presented to him to be kissed, and the impression left on his mind by what he saw was, that he should have much to suffer for the love of God. He was laid up for some time from a sore foot about this period, and one day, after being ravished out of his senses for some time, he gave such a piercing and painful scream that his brother John Baptist and his sister Teresa ran to him immediately. He returned to consciousness in a few moments, and to their queries, replied that he would never tell them what he had seen. He sent for F. Jerome, and his sister again exercised her curiosity during the long conference he had with his director, so that she overheard Paul say—" Oh, F. Jerome, what an eternity ! " The burden of his domestic exhortations for a long time after this was, to beg of the members of his family, for the sake of the pains of their Redeemer, and their own souls, to do all in their power to prevent the unhappiness of falling into hell. They concluded from these circumstances that he must have had such a vision of that place of torments as was accorded to S. Teresa, which would be a suitable favour for one who was called to labour all his life long at keeping souls out of sin and hell.

He now lost his directors. The usual disturber of religious home-settling, a chapter, sent both the good Capuchins off to far-distant houses. Our Saint fell into

the hands of a certain Don Paolo Cerruti after this. This priest was a man of very great penetration, and he made up his mind to try the young Saint by showing himself more cross-grained than the parish priest. He pooh-poohed all Paul's prayers, contemplations, and visits. He scolded in season and out of season, told him to give up dreaming and make his meditation on mortal sin, hell-fire, and the like. He would make him wait hours for confession, although he had walked four miles fasting. Paul obeyed him strictly, although he found that his new exercises of piety were dry, sapless, and insipid. What with his austerities, long prayers, which he used to make for hours kneeling without support, with his hands crossed upon his breast, and his new trials the poor man fell into a serious illness. He soon recovered though, and with his fresh bodily strength received also fresh consolation of mind. The confessor made a wonderful stretch in indulgence in allowing him to meditate on heaven. In this meditation Paul found himself raised higher still in his union with God. It was here he heard those secret words, "Son, he who approaches Me, approaches thorns;" and, "Son, in heaven, the beatified soul will not be united to Me merely as one friend is to another, but as red-hot iron is penetrated by the fire." It was in this very meditation that he received the first clear intimation of the Institute which he was destined to found.

The confessor at length found out the solidity of Paul's sanctity, and sent him to the Bishop, Monsignor Gattinara. In fact, he was so convinced of the great holiness of our Saint, that he said he was sure he would yet be canonized, and sent him many postulants when the Con-

gregation of the Passion was founded. This holy prelate, who became afterwards Archbishop of Turin, and died at the age of eighty-five, after having offered himself to God as sacrifice for his flock, who were threatened with an invasion of the French in 1743, understood Paul, and assisted him both in finding out his real vocation and in following it.

One day, in the summer of 1720, S. Paul was returning home, after having been to communion in the church of the Capuchins, when he had the following vision :—He was wrapped up in ecstasy, and saw himself clothed in a long black tunic, with a white cross upon the breast of it, and the Sacred Name of JESUS in white letters written under it. He also perceived one of those interior locutions, which mystic saints tell us of, and the voice said :—“ This is to signify how pure and spotless ought to be the heart which bears engraven upon it the Sacred Name of Jesus.” Before the ecstasy ceased, the tunic was presented to him, and he embraced it joyfully. He then felt a burning desire to collect companions, and found, with the approbation of the Church, a congregation, to be styled *The Poor of Jesus*. Shortly after, when engaged in prayer, he saw the Blessed Virgin, who showed to him the same habit, but to the word JESU were added XPI PASSIO, which means, *The Passion of Jesus Christ*. Paul wrote out a full account of those visions, and gave it to the Bishop, who simply looked at it and was silent. The Saint began to hesitate a little then, as to whether he might not have been deluded, when the Blessed Virgin appeared to him, in the self-same habit, with the badge upon it, exactly as the Passionists wear it to the present day. She said also, “ My son, thou seest that I am clothed

in mourning. This is for the sorrowful passion of my beloved son Jesus. Thus art thou to be clothed, and thou hast to found a congregation in which the members will be clothed in this wise, and they shall have to mourn continually for the passion and death of my dear Son." Many years afterwards the Saint would exclaim, when thinking of this vision, "Oh, how beautiful!" In the first preface to the rules he wrote: "When I saw the holy tunic presented to me, I did not see any corporeal form . . . I saw it in God; that is, the soul knows that it is God, because He makes it understand this, by an intelligence infused into the soul."

It is almost unnecessary to remark that these visions with which S. Paul was favoured possessed all the qualities which mystic writers assign to those which come from God. He was a faithful servant of God from his cradle, had now reached the twenty-sixth year of his age in the practice of heroic virtue, rare even in the first ages of the Church, and unexampled in latter times. He spent nearly seven hours out of the twenty-four in contemplation for nearly twenty years preceding this date, and he must have had sufficient experience of heavenly favours during those long hours which he passed communing with his God. We shall quote a few passages from S. John of the Cross, the master of mystic theology, not so much by way of apology, as in order to enable the reader to form a right judgment on the matter.

In the second book of the *Ascent of Mount Carmel* he says: "When God grants this favour (a vision) to any one, He communicates to him that supernatural light, wherein he beholds what God wills, most easily and most distinctly, whether they be things of heaven or of earth ;

neither is their presence nor absence any impediment to the vision.

“ When these visions occur, it is as if the door were opened into a most marvellous light, whereby the soul sees, as men do when the lightning flashes in a dark night, The lightning makes surrounding objects visible for an instant, and then leaves them in obscurity, though the forms of them remain in the fancy. But in the case of the soul the vision is much more perfect ; for those things it saw in the spirit in that light are so impressed upon it, that whenever God enlightens it again, it beholds them as distinctly as it did at first, precisely as in a mirror, in which we see objects reflected whenever we look upon it. These visions once granted to the soul never again leave it altogether : for the forms remain, though they become somewhat indistinct in the course of time.

“ The effects of these visions in the soul are quietness, enlightenment, joy-like glory, sweetness, pureness, love, humility, inclination or elevation of the mind to God.”— (Vol. i. p. 171. Mr Lewis’s translation.)

To return to our narrative. The Bishop revolved the matter seriously in his mind, and consulted several men eminent for their knowledge of spiritual things ; among the rest, F. Columban, of Genoa, who was formerly Paul’s confessor. From a letter which was written to his lordship by the latter, we learn that Paul had already passed through the highest grades of contemplative prayer. All agreed that it was a call from heaven, and the Bishop forthwith determined that Paul should receive, from his own hands, a habit like that which he had seen in the visions, and begin at once the course of life to which he was so clearly called.

CHAPTER V

HE RECEIVES THE HABIT

TO found a religious Order is, perhaps, the greatest work in the Church. It is not merely the drawing up of a code of laws which are to bind a certain number of persons to a prescribed routine of spiritual exercises. It is more, it is the gauging the needs of the time, and the fitting of a supply for them. A founder has to go before all his followers in the perfect observance of the rules he lays down ; nay, those rules must be a simple transcript of his own life. He has to consult the tastes, the temperaments of future generations as well as his own, to blend severity and sweetness so perfectly that his system of life will attract the fervent and not repel the lukewarm. He has to undergo the criticisms and persecutions of an exacting world, which resents every attempt at a perfect life as an encroachment on its own time-honoured customs. He has to see his work thwarted by existent religious bodies, who have laboured long and successfully in the vineyard, and grudge the penny to those who begin to labour so late in the day, when they themselves have borne *pondus diei et æstus*. This is not all. He must have the approbation of the Bishop for every step he takes in laying the foundation of the future work, and that of the Pope for the superstructure. This is more difficult to obtain than one would at first sight imagine. The genius of the Church is eminently conservative. She

repels novelties of any shape or form, and her instincts recoil at anything which jars in the slightest degree with pre-existent customs. The reformer of abuses she always hails, but his reforms must be carried out according to her own teachings, or he is flung out of her pale. She has, besides, a traditional repugnance against the multiplication of different orders ; and that repugnance is expressed in more than one decree of her great Councils. She is ready to meet every exigency which may arise within the fold, but prefers burnishing up old armour to forging, much more to inventing, new. The great families who have fought her battles in past ages, handed down her traditions, built up her theology, filled her sees, and often held her keys, have endeared themselves to her heart, and it will be difficult, indeed, to induce her to clip their privileges or divide them amongst others. At the same time, she is the universal mother of all, and as young to-day as she was when she gave birth to S. Augustine or S. Benedict. The ages in which she lives are new with a special newness. Hers is the perennial youth of heaven, theirs is the birth of yesterday. This youth of the world she suits herself to and trains in the way that is fittest for it, and from its own self she draws forth the instruments wherewith to shape and mould it to her satisfaction. These two great features of the Church's practical working have to be met by the founder of a religious order.

A philosopher, who analyzed the genius of the Church, and put forth his metaphysics to establish an Order to suit, would fail miserably. The very idea of a man trying such a thing looks so ridiculous that one is inclined to laugh at the hypothesis. And yet, why should it be so ?

simply for this reason. The Church wants both philosophers and saints, but she wants philosophers for writing books and teaching boys ; she wants saints for founding orders. The wonder is that saints are generally quite unconscious of the great work they are setting on foot. They make no speculations but prayer, and labour at carrying out their designs by mortifying their flesh. Yet all the time they are doing wonderful things, which they themselves, perhaps, are the last to comprehend to the full. They act in singleness of purpose and simplicity of mind, and, behold ! a complex, organized, admirable power sent upon the world. It is not their work ; but it is God's work through them, preserving enough of their spirit and character to make it be fathered upon them by succeeding generations.

S. Paul of the Cross had all these difficulties to meet, now that his work was plainly marked out for him. He had other difficulties, which it may be thought beneath our subject to notice, but which were none the less more keenly felt by him.

It is a common fallacy for those who are not of the fold (and even some who are, are not always exempt from it) to suppose that those who join religious orders must be cold, heartless, pragmatic folks, or, perchance, wild enthusiasts, who fall in love with austerities by a peculiar fascination to which, thanks to good common sense, few are likely to yield. Religious men and women are not a bit different from those who remain behind them in the world, except in that they are called to another state, and that they are pleased to be chosen to it. Do people forget, all at once, what manner of boys and girls those were whom they now know to be monks and nuns, and

whom they once knew to be the gayest, liveliest, pleasantest members of their social circles? Generally, those who join religious orders are more tender-hearted, more earnest, but more prone to fidelity and perseverance than those they leave behind them. Friends seldom realise what pangs it costs the young heart which breaks with them for ever, to leave them and be the companions of strangers, whom it knows little about, towards whom it feels not a particle of natural affection. We hear every day of parents grieving over the loss of their children, and of families made desolate, because a young man or a young woman has chosen to reject the hand of a neighbour and taken the hand of the Heavenly Spouse instead. A gentleman will ungrudgingly give his daughter a large dowry, in marriage, where she may run the chance of being ill treated, or deserted, but he will grudge the tithe of it, if it be required, to make her happy here and hereafter in a convent. However, such feelings do exist, and will exist to the end. It is well for parents and relatives to know that those who make sacrifices for the kingdom of heaven have first to sacrifice their own dearest feelings, not the least part of which is the consciousness that they are giving pain to those who will not or cannot understand what it is to choose the better part.

How S. Paul met the first series of difficulties will sufficiently appear in the course of this history, how he met the second we shall see presently.

Scarcely had our Saint come to his final resolution, than he was assailed by temptations and trials from within and from without. Long as he had been detached from the world and living only for God, the great separa-

tion now about to be made did not seem to him the less painful. His very holiness had sanctified all his ties of relationship ; he was the loved of his family circle ; they were all good and pious, and why should he separate from them ? He said himself, long after this date, " Oh, if you knew the struggles which I went through before I embraced the sort of life which I now follow, the compassion I felt for my relations—poor father ! poor mother !—who loved me so much, and looked up to me for the support of their house, and the comfort of their declining years. Add to this the great horror the devil caused me, my interior desolations, my apprehensions, my dark melancholy. It seemed to me as if I could not stand it longer—the devil trying to persuade me I was deceived, that I might serve God better in some other way. I was dry and tempted in every way—I had no devotion—the sound of the church bells became hateful to me—everyone I saw seemed happy except my miserable self." Before Paul takes leave of his friends, we had better put a picture of him on paper. He was tall of stature and of slender build, had a placid modest countenance, clear calm eyes, an elevated and wide forehead, a distinct, sonorous, and penetrating voice. His appearance struck one as grave and majestic, while there was a total absence of anything like needless reserve. His very majesty was amiable and attractive, but evoked reverence rather than affection in early life ; whilst in his old age he looked like one whom you could not love sufficiently. His manners were affable and respectful, but free from a shadow of affectation. His temperament was sanguine and very sensitive. So natural and easy did he seem in all his

actions, that the sentiments of his soul might be read upon his features.

His interior conflicts gave way speedily to the power of Divine grace, and he at length braced himself for the great step he was about to take. He purchased with an alms given him by the Bishop a piece of coarse sackcloth called *albagio*, a sort of stuff used by the poorest people, had it dyed black and made into a tunic like that which he saw in his vision. It was arranged that he should be vested in this penitential garb on the Feast of the Presentation, 1720 ; but as that feast fell upon a Thursday, he deferred the ceremony until the next day, in order that he might commemorate at the same time the Passion and Death of our Lord. On the 21st of November he made his final preparation. He received Communion that morning, visited all the churches of the town, came home in the evening, and kneeling down before his parents, brothers, and sisters, begged his parents to grant him their leave and blessing for the new life he was about to embrace. Amid a scene which it would be difficult to describe, the parents, in accents broken by sighs, blessed him and embraced him : the other members of the family could only feel that their saintly brother was leaving them, and taking their hearts with him. Paul then recited the *Te Deum*, in thanksgiving for his success so far, and the *Miserere* for himself.

On the next day, which was a cold, sharp day, the 22nd November, 1720, he departed with the dawn from his father's house, and walked to Alessandria to see the Bishop. His lordship blessed the habit and clothed Paul with it in his private oratory ; the badge was not to be worn until the Holy See approved ; and from that day we date the foundation of our Institute.

CHAPTER VI

THE WRITING OF THE RULES

PAUL had now received the habit which he was to wear to the end of his life, and which so many others were also to assume in due course. A long, long novitiate was yet in store for poor Paul. Nearly five years elapsed before he received the first permission from the Holy See. Six years afterwards, in 1731, he received a more definite permission and blessing; the first retreat of our Order was not opened until 1737; the specific approbation was not received until 1741, and it was only in 1746—twenty-one years after Paul assumed the habit, that his new Institute was properly organised as a religious body. The trials he had to undergo, and the works he performed in this long interval, are to come under our notice now, and we must begin with the fundamental work, the writing of the rules.

As soon as Paul found himself in the livery of his Divine Master all his troubles of mind disappeared. He found an indescribable sweetness in the first taste of his new mode of life. A courage corresponding with his vocation and future difficulties seemed, all at once, infused into his soul, and he felt that he approached them with a strength hitherto unknown to him. He entreated the Bishop to consign to his use for forty days a triangular damp, ill-lighted, uncomfortable cell, which adjoined the sacristy of the church of S. Carlo in Castellazzo. He

then set off bare-headed and bare-footed for this hermit's cell, and did not turn aside upon his way even to pass greetings with his family.

How strange it looks that, in the last century, when human prudence and self-comfort exercised so wide a sway over men, there should be in the world, almost unknown to it, a solitary like poor Paul. How difficult it is for us to understand all those proceedings of his ! It is all very well to take up an accomplished fact and applaud it ; but it is necessary to go into the minutest details of its formation in order to be able thoroughly to comprehend its worth, by seeing the sacrifices which it cost. Here is the first of them : there were a few vine branches and a bundle of straw in a corner of this cell which he disposed in order for a couch, and on this he threw himself for a few hours' repose. He arose at midnight, shivering as he must be from head to foot, went before the Blessed Sacrament to recite Matins and Lauds, and make two hours' meditation. In the morning he served masses, and received Communion. He then spent the day in penitential and pious exercises, satisfying the cravings of hunger with a morsel of bread and a draught of water. A diary which he kept during those days in obedience to his Bishop's directions, gives us a clear notion of the state of his spirit at the time. The flesh, attenuated by such hardships, miserably clad, and for the first time, in the very commencement of winter, was often on the point of sinking beneath the labours which his fervour subjected it to. He speaks of how he longed for a little rest and ease, in the midst of his prayer, and how he continued to give no heed to the pleadings of nature, even when he trembled from head to foot, his

knees aching and communicating their pain to every bone of his body. The sufferings of the night were rewarded by the fervour which he experienced when he received his Lord in the morning. Great elevations of mind in prayer were accorded to him. Those liquefactions, and spiritual inebriations, which are described in mystical books, and are the only interpretation of the account in the diary, were usual with him. He was not free from distractions; but he describes how it is that those distractions did not hinder his profiting from his prayers: "just as the kicking, and sprawling, and turning of eyes, head, arms, and legs, of an infant at its mother's breast does not hinder its taking in sufficient food as long as it keeps its mouth to the pap."

These spiritual consolations would be weighed down next day by great desolation of mind, horrid temptations to blasphemy, inconstancy, anger, and impatience, which merged his soul in a deeper and darker pool of affliction than that in which it groaned just before he had received the habit. These temptations, which bore directly against his union with God by charity, he tried to disperse by invoking the sweet name of Mary. The other class of temptations, which only degraded him in his own eyes, he kept and cherished with the sentiments of S. Teresa "to suffer or die." He passed through such dreadful stages of desolation that his soul was purified in a few days from all dross of pride and concupiscence, and he found himself in the arms of divine charity with no other desire than to spend himself and be spent in the promotion of God's love upon earth.

His brother, John Baptist, paid him a visit in his little room, and signified his intention of being a future com-

panion. This was a source of great joy to poor Paul ; and the two saintly brothers regaled themselves for some time on the delightful prospects of having to suffer so much for the love of Christ. Alternations of interior joys and sorrows succeeded each other, until the morning of the 28th, the seventh day of his retreat, when he had a vision, in which he saw the different glorified founders of religious orders in heaven interceding for the success of that which he was about to found. He felt at once that his prayers were granted, as they could not well be refused when seconded by such advocacy.

In this spirit of joy he began to write the rules on the tenth day of his retreat and finished them on the fifteenth, although he gave no time to writing except what remained from his usual devotions ; that is, he began writing on the 2nd of December and concluded on the 7th. One is struck with wonder when he reads over those precious documents—this legacy of our holy Father to his children—for the fiftieth or hundredth time, and finds new evidences of wisdom in them at every reading. He had no rules to copy from, no books to refer to, no earthly guide to consult during their composition. There is no single department of the religious life which he does not legislate for, and that with such wisdom and aptitude that we see the reason for observing a rule in the very words which convey it to us. When we remember the multitude of disciplinary regulations which are laid down in canon law for the proper adjustment of the rights and privileges of religious, and when we have no evidence that Paul ever read a volume of decrees, or even a treatise of positive theology up to this time, it is marvellous how this production comes up to the requirements of the

Church. This book of rules had to pass through the hands of many learned doctors before its final approbation, and no change was ever made in them ; except a few modifications which brought them down to the capability of ordinary constitutions whilst leaving a margin for the exercise of greater austerities, if God gave proportionate grace to any special member of the Order. All these apparent wonders are accounted for by his own simple statement. " I wish you to know that when I wrote, I wrote as fast as if there had been somebody in a professor's chair dictating to me. I felt the words come from my heart. I have written this, that it may be known that it was a particular inspiration of God ; as to myself, there is nothing in me but sin and ignorance." This extract is taken by his biographers from the preface to the first edition of the Holy Rules. The more we examine the rules the more convinced we become of their being the fruit of that secondary kind of inspiration, which just falls short of the infallibility due to Scripture.

When the rules were written, he continued his retreat. His consolations increased every day. On the 26th of December, the feast of the Proto-martyr, he was praying before the Blessed Sacrament, when he began to reflect upon those misguided men who deny the Real Presence of our Lord in this mystery. England especially came before his mind. That once gifted country, whose very soil is consecrated, and whose every feature, deformed as they are by the destroying hand of heresy, still remain as crumbling monuments of her ancient faith, came into Paul's mind with such vivid pleadings to be restored to its former self, that from that day till his death he never

knelt in prayer without petitioning for its conversion. How many of those who, since his day, have been received into the bosom of the Church owe their conversion to the prayers and labours of this poor Italian priest? We shall know only in the next life. It is remarkable that the inspiration to pray for England's conversion synchronized with the writing of our rules.

On the 2nd January, 1721, the next day after he had concluded his forty days' retreat, he went to Alessandria in order to give the Bishop a full account of his experiences during the time, and also to show him the rules. The Bishop was quite satisfied with what he heard and saw; but before sanctioning the work, he wished to have the advice of others in whose penetration and sanctity he could confide. He ordered Paul to take the copy of the rules to Pontedecimo, and show them to F. Columban. Pontedecimo is about forty miles from Castellazzo; and in going from one town to the other, he had to cross one of the chains of the Appenines. At the season of the year in which Paul was ordered to go there, these mountains were covered with snow, and the ravines and incisions made for the convenience of passengers being often filled with snow-drift, rendered the journey doubly dangerous. Across this almost impassable way Paul resolved to proceed. He was provided with no covering but the single poor tunic, his head and feet were bare, and his only companion was a crucifix which he carried on his breast. He set off at once, and travelled for several days, trusting to Providence for the chance of sustenance by day and a lodging at night. His feet were shortly bleeding from chilblains, his limbs weary, his hair frozen, and the circulation of the blood almost stopped. It was

the eve of the Epiphany, and he had fasted rigidly that day. Now towards evening he looked as far as eye could reach, and only a white horizon and snow-capped mountains met his view—not a house was to be seen, nor trace of a human being. He felt as if he could not move another pace, and he knew if he lay down to rest it would cost him his life. Famished wolves crossed his path every now and then, and his only protection from their fangs was his prayers. He redoubled those prayers now, and ardently besought our Lord to conduct him safe to the top of the ridge of mountain on which he was likely to be benighted. He arrived there soon, and found a poor hut to which travellers occasionally had recourse. It was occupied then by a few policemen. Paul entered, and begged upon his knees for succour in his distress. The policemen were touched to the heart by the sight of this poor, humble servant of God, and vied with one another in making him as comfortable as he would allow them. S. Paul never forgot this kindness, and he ever afterwards had a particular regard for policemen. He used to show this regard on every occasion, and felt great pleasure in their spiritual direction, especially on missions, alleging as his reason that they had aided him in the greatest necessity which he ever was in.

Father Columban was delighted to see his penitent once more ; and we may imagine what he felt when he saw him in the garb of which they had so often spoken together. He approved thoroughly of the rule and the spirit in which it was drawn up, and his judgment was afterwards confirmed by the Bishop.

CHAPTER VII

THE CRADLE OF THE ORDER

THE Bishop assigned to Paul a little church dedicated to the Most Holy Trinity, as his first residence. He remained here but a very short time, something less than a month, and then took possession of a little hermitage attached to the church of S. Stefano, which was but a short distance outside the town of Castellazzo. This occurred on the 25th of January, 1721.

With the hermitage, he also received permission to assemble the children of the town and catechize them. This was all he could do at present towards furthering the spirit of his Institute, inasmuch as he had received no orders and had given no proofs of apostolic powers beyond his own sanctity. Paul showed the commission he had received to the parish priest, who did not wish him to carry it out at once, because the people were all busy in the carnival and could not be induced to give up their sports until Lent set in. Paul, however, tried what could be done. He took a processional cross and a bell, and went through every street of the town, ringing his bell and saying aloud, "To the Catechism in the Church of S. Carlo. Fathers and mothers, send your children to the Christian doctrine; you will have to give a severe account of your negligence if you do not." In a short time a large crowd assembled around the poor hermit, and when he came to the church he saw it filled with

people, and the children were pushed forward for instructions whilst the others listened attentively.

This was properly Paul's first mission. He began to be a prophet in his own country, and, contrary to the general rule, was very well received. When he was among strangers he was mocked and scouted publicly, and it is well to remark the peculiar nature of these mockeries. Italian "roughs" were accustomed to see bare-footed friars in great plenty, and therefore did not look upon Paul exactly as a fool or a fanatic. They saw that his habit was not precisely like those they were acquainted with, and they concluded that he had been a great sinner whom a confessor had sentenced to this method of satisfaction. Their jokes ran something after this fashion :—" I say, that lad must have committed some fine blunders." " How would you like a confessor who'd give you such a penance ? " Some, of course, took a different tone, and these were wise and prudent people, who thought themselves commissioned by some unknown power to shout down everything which appeared to their wisdom extravagant.

The town of Castellazzo, like every other town, must have possessed a sufficient stock of these two classes of opponents to S. Paul, but we are not told aught of their doings at this stage of his career. Doubtless, they knew Paul well ; he bore the reputation of a saint in the town, long before his hair was shorn or his body incased in his rough coat of mourning. The change was one which might have been expected from his antecedents. They had, moreover, such reliance upon his sound solid sense and exalted piety, that they concluded at once his ways were the ways of a wisdom superior to theirs. This will

account for the events which are recorded of him in the infancy of our Order. The people followed him wherever he went, and when a crowd was collected he would turn round and speak to them of the sufferings of our Lord. That was a subject which required meditation rather than erudition, and which touches the heart more by simplicity and unction of narrative than by rhetorical ornaments or long and learned dissertations. The Bishop sent various missionaries through his diocese, but Castellazzo he assigned to Paul, and commanded him to ascend the pulpit and preach the Gospel. This was a novel sight in the eighteenth century. A man, without orders, preaching and catechising, and converting people, and stirring up the whole place to repentance. The three last days of the carnival, when its follies and evils reach their greatest excess, were converted by the ministrations of the hermit of S. Stefano into days of penance and devotion.

Two companions joined him now, one was his brother John Baptist, the other was a certain Paolo Sardi. This first retreat of our Order consisted of too small rooms, one above the other. The under one served as kitchen, parlour, and refectory, the other as a cell. The cell was furnished with a sack of straw, a ragged coverlet, a discipline, a stool, and an excuse for a table. Sardi went home to his father's to sleep, and the two brothers used friendly invitations and arguments, each to induce the other to make use of their one bed, which generally concluded by both sleeping on the floor. They had a basket outside the door to receive what alms good people were pleased to give them. Out of those alms they supplied their scanty table once a day with a few crusts of dry

bread, and distributed the rest to beggars, who were not half as poor as themselves. Paul writes to his Bishop to say that he thinks he could live by eating only once in the two days ; but the Bishop thought otherwise and refused him permission to try the *régime*. In this sort of life they were perfectly happy. They never laid anything by for to-morrow, and were often unable to break their fast at noon, as was their custom. One day they had nothing whatever, and the father of Paul came to see them. He was struck by the pale, emaciated countenances of his sons, and asked them if they had got anything to eat. They said not as yet, but that Providence would see to their wants in good time. The father took his hat, and ordered them, in virtue of his paternal authority, to accept of what he should send them ; a good dinner was accordingly sent to the hermitage by Mrs Danei, and they were obliged to indulge in such a luxury, although they did not violate the rule of abstinence withal. They did not forget the good old monkish practice of hospitality neither, slender as were their means. We are told in the quaint records of the time how the Saint entertained his visitors, and what discriminating taste he showed in the table he set before them. Some ecclesiastics and religious honoured him with a visit, and he invited them to a hearty meal of brown bread and garlic, with fresh spring water out of an earthen cup. The Marchioness of Pozzo came another day, and she was treated, as became her rank and female delicacy, to a more exquisite meal ; the hermits gave her white bread, an onion, and some lettuce with salt, and the usual beverage. A pious lady made them a present of a cake, which she took good care

should be made up with such condiments as would not shock the abstemiousness of the solitaries. This cake, however, was found guilty of being too great a luxury, and would, in all likelihood, be consigned to the ignoble prison of some beggar man's wallet, if chance had not found it an escape. A young nobleman came to visit Paul at the critical juncture, and when they had concluded their conference, he placed the cake before him. "Paul," he said, after eating some, "have you got nothing to drink here?" "Oh, yes," replied the Saint, "we have a cellar stockfull, and it never gets empty," pointing to a well. They lighted no fire, for they ate their meals as they got them. Good old Luke Danei looked them up in this. One cold day he came in and found them shivering. He scolded them, bustled off for an armful of sticks, and made them a fire, at which he obliged them to warm themselves. Whilst Paul was indulging in this little luxury, somehow or other he knocked his forehead against the mantelpiece, perhaps to make up for the relaxation, or perhaps by chance; but he immediately kissed the stone, and said, to the inquiries of his parent, "Oh, it's nothing." It was remarked that he always kissed instruments of penance, whether voluntary or not, as if to show his gratitude for the favour they did him in afflicting his body.

On Sundays and festivals, the three used to go to one of the churches in the town, and teach catechism for a couple of hours; then Paul got into the pulpit and preached upon the passion of our Lord or some of the eternal truths. In the little church attached to the hermitage it was Paul's practice to give, on the week days, meditations on the passion as well as instructions on

the manner of making mental prayer. The concourse became so large during the first Lent that they had to divide the hearers into two classes. The women came in the forenoon, and the men in the evening, when their work was done. When the instructions were over they sang a hymn or two and went home. One evening Paolo Sardi saw two gentlemen coming to the hermitage ; they were both of the same name, and perhaps of the same profession—one at least was a doctor, and they bore each other a deadly hatred which they took care to manifest on every possible occasion, to the great scandal of their neighbours. He told Paul of it, and he preached that evening on the words of Jesus on the Cross, " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." After the sermon each of them went, unknown to the other, to Paul's cell, and he succeeded in effecting a perfect reconciliation. They both went to confession and communion in the same church next day, and began to edify by their example henceforward those whom they formerly disedified.

His first mission, beyond his own town, was given in a place called Retorto. The Marquis of Pozzo and his lady heard and saw the wonders which the Saint was performing, and invited him to come and evangelize their tenants. The Bishop agreed to their request, and Paul went there at once. All the country was astir to see the new and extraordinary missionary of whom everybody spoke. The effects were immense. Crowds were seen around the confessionals, and priests could scarcely be found sufficient to hear all the penitents. Paul began to work miracles also at this time. A boatful of people were coming to the mission across a river which,

suddenly swollen by the mountain torrents, threatened to carry them off, and dash them to pieces against rocks, or drown them in the deep beds of the river. All on shore were hailing and shouting to the boat, and throwing them ropes—the poor voyagers saw only death before them. Paul was told of it. He went, blessed the river with his crucifix, and, in a moment, by the power of Him who bids the winds be still and they obey, the torrent abated, and the boat came across safely. His next miracle was the cure of a virulent sore. It was instantaneous. These miracles and the life and works of the Saint spread his name, of course, far and wide, and the hermitage promised to be very soon a noisy place from the number of visitors who flocked to it. Whenever news came of affrays coming off between enemies, of longstanding coldnesses, of infirmities, or heedlessness of religious duties, Paul and one of his companions went off at once to succour, to prevent, or to reconcile. So much reverence had the people for him, that when he instituted a penitential procession on one occasion, noble ladies were seen to walk in it barefooted.

CHAPTER VIII

HIS FIRST JOURNEY TO ROME

THE short experience which the Poor of Jesus had of the working of their rules, and the attractions and blessings it was likely to possess, made Paul think of getting a higher sanction. As long as they continued to practise it, in their first fervour, it was its own sanction ; but, by degrees, that fervour must cool, and members were sure to join them who would have neither physical nor moral strength sufficient to keep up to the letter of their law. Until the rule received the approval of the Pope it could not have the canonical or legal authority which so important a document ought to be invested with. The rule began to tell somewhat to its own disadvantage very shortly—head and feet altogether bare, and the body barely covered, was too severe for the strongest constitution and the warmest heart, if we except the two brothers, who seemed to have inherited the spirit of S. Anthony or S. Simon Stylites. Paolo Sardi accordingly broke down after a few trials, and left them. We know that afterwards many points of the rule were modified by the Roman Curia, which brought it into its present shape ; but this modification was a long way off. Until it did come, however, it was virtue to observe it strictly, for only lukewarmness takes dispensations before they are granted.

Before going to Rome, Paul had an inspiration to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. He was full of that old and deep devotion which spilt the noblest Christian blood upon the plains of Palestine—devotion to the passion of our Lord. It is the most natural of all human instincts, that we should love to trace the scenes in which those events which we admire or venerate were enacted. The Englishman loves to walk over the plain of Waterloo, or scour the inside and the outside of an old house in Stratford-on-Avon. An Irishman in Clontarf or Fontenoy, and a Scotchman in Bannockburn, are both led by the same instinct to “remember the glories of Brian the Brave,” or sing their “Scots wha hae.” Every nation, nay every tribe and every family, have some spot where the *lares* of their military and worldly glory are sure to be set up. The cosmopolitan tendency of modern notions makes all nations vie in paying the proper tribute to places rendered famous by the events which first brought them into notice. This is the natural spirit of pilgrimage. In the middle ages, when faith was first and everything else came after, this spirit spent itself in visiting shrines and sanctuaries. That Jerusalem should be a place of absorbing interest, was quite right. There were the scenes of the greatest event which ever took place. The garden of Olives, the brook Cedron, the gates, the streets which led to Calvary, Calvary itself, and the Holy Sepulchre, were places where the heart had its fill and could overflow with holy enthusiasm. A visit to Rome was great, but a visit to Jerusalem was greater. Catholics sing—

O Roma feli: , quæ duorum principum,
Es purpuratæ gloriosa sanguine.

But Jerusalem was beyond the praise of a distich, for she was purpled by the blood of the King and Lord of martyred princes. It is the peculiar genius of the Catholic Church that she consecrates every feeling of our nature ; art, science, poetry, music, have all niches in her temple of fame ; if it would not be more correct to say that they owe in part their creation and entirely their development to her fostering care. Those who break away from the Church begin by paganising everything, up to the interpretation of Scripture ; the Catholic Church goes quite a contrary way. Every noble and enthusiastic child of the Church is pregnant with her spirit, and nothing that she prizes comes amiss to him. This will help us to understand Paul's projects in the way of pilgrimages. In his day it was not so easy to go to Jerusalem, but there was a sanctuary in Varallo on the confines of Switzerland, where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and other parts of the holy city were imitated. Thither Paul repaired to satisfy his devotion ; he then wrote to his Bishop for leave to go to Rome, and the leave was cordially granted. John Baptist wished to accompany him, and even followed his brother as far as Genoa, hoping he might relent in his resolution of going alone ; but no : at length, John Baptist said, " Well, then, you will go, but you will find no peace without me," and so saying returned to the hermitage after taking an affectionate farewell of his brother.

They met a kind benefactor in Genoa who lodged Paul in his house whilst he was waiting for the sailing of the packet to Civita Vecchia, and paid his passage for him. Paul set sail on the 8th September to perform this long journey of about three hundred miles without a farthing

in his pocket, nor a friend on the way, and yet Providence brought him as speedily to the end of his journey as if he had been amply provided with everything. On arriving at Civita Vecchia they were obliged to go into quarantine. Paul had no means of living on board during the time, and the officers of health allowed him the munificent sum of a penny a day, which was more than sufficient, however, to supply the holy man with bread and water. During the quarantine Paul was occupied in evangelizing the sailors, and making a clean copy of his rules. He caused a great change on board, as may be well imagined. Sailors, accustomed to a reckless, heedless life, are very easily impressed, when free from the temptations of a crowded city. The ship seemed a monastery, from its hymns and prayers, before the end of the time, and it was affecting to see with what regret these honest, simple souls parted at last from their holy passenger.

When he landed he commenced his journey to Rome on foot. The road from Civita Vecchia to Rome is in many parts quite unsheltered by trees or hills, and this, joined to a clear Italian sky and the hot autumn sun, must be very oppressive to one coming, for the first time, from the mountainous districts of Piedmont. At the close of his first day's march he had to apply at a cottage on the roadside for a morsel of food and lodgings for the night. Both were cheerfully given him by a good Spaniard who inhabited the hovel. On the next day, the cupola of S. Peter was seen by him, and at the first sight of the eternal city he fell on his knees and gave vent to his devotion. He did the same at the Porta Cavalleggeri, and kissed that sacred soil, which was sodden

with the blood of so many thousands of martyrs. Paul walked along those colonnades which surround the piazza of the Vatican : he heeded not the magnificent jets of water which cool the atmosphere, nor the works of art which adorn the way ; he passed by the obelisk surmounted by the sign of our Redemption, and did not halt until he prostrated before the tomb of the Apostles, and prayed a long time.

He arose at length, far from comforted, and had to encounter the sarcastic taunts, for which the Roman populace is remarkable, as he went forth into the street. Some charitable person directed him to the great hospice of the Holy Trinity, where needy strangers ever find a refuge. Here Paul had to undergo the confusion of being waited on by nobles and having his feet washed by a cardinal. He refused, however, the *testone* which was given him, as the usual dole, and begged the donor to give it to some other poor person, as he stood in no need of money.

On the following morning Paul heard mass, received communion, and then went to the Vatican to see the Pope, who was then Innocent III. In his simplicity, Paul ascended the staircase, entered the first apartment in fear and trembling, and asked the first person he met if he could see the Pope. This man eyed him from head to foot, grew indignant at what he thought his boldness, and not only refused his request, but chased him clean out of the palace amid contumelies and reproaches. Paul went off in silence, conscious that he richly deserved to be driven out of so sacred a place, being such a vile sinner as he thought himself. He moved on quietly to return to his work, convinced that the time had not arrived

for obtaining the Seal of the Fisherman. Poor dear Father, we follow you from that palace with tears in our eyes, and we would fain suggest to you the possibility of still obtaining an audience. You have letters from your Bishop, and the voices of hundreds, could they be but heard, to recommend you ; the influence of some great dignitary in Rome could easily be had if you only go to a little trouble in order to procure it. It is a long way back to Castellazzo, and there is no prospect of your being able to undertake such a journey again for many years. But the good hermit is deaf to ours or any other such advices if they met his ears. He is satisfied that God's will is not yet manifested. He will not wait in Rome to see if a divine interposition may not make the Pope seek him out as it once did in the cases of SS. Dominic and Francis. He makes up his mind to leave Rome, and, weary and hungry, he sits down upon a stone in the courtyard of the Quirinal, he takes out a piece of bread which was given him at the Trinità that morning, and, with water from the fountain close by, he began his only meal. Scarcely had he begun when a beggar came up to him and asked an alms. Paul looked first at the beggar and then at his only piece of bread, and said, " Well, brother, let us go shares," and forthwith he gave the other poor man half what he had.

He went off then to the basilica of Sta. Maria Maggiore, and in that sacred edifice, before a miraculous statue of our Lady, he emitted a vow of propagating a devotion to, and a grateful remembrance of The Passion of our Lord. This done he placed himself and his future institute under the protection of the Mother of God, and with a light heart started on his return,

He was received *gratis* into a vessel, which was about to sail down the Tiber, by its charitable captain, and he took his berth that same evening. During the whole passage to S. Severa he was insulted and persecuted, even to blows, by a fellow traveller, who was obliged, by his profession, to give edification instead of scandal to all on board. This was hard to bear, but Paul endured it in silence. From S. Severa he walked to Civita Vecchia. Here he was obliged to sleep under a portico in the open air. At Civita Vecchia his route changed. He intended going home by another way than that by which he came, for reasons which we shall assign in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX

MONTE ARGENTARO

THE vessel which carried Paul from Genoa to Civita Vecchia, on his way to Rome, was becalmed alongside a beautiful island off the Tuscan coast, which makes two graceful bays on each side with the mainland from which it is separated by a very narrow strip of land. The sailors shouted Monte Argentaro ! and at the words there rushed into Paul's mind a sentence which he once heard in prayer before a statue of our Lady : " Paul, come to Monte Argentaro, for I am alone there." Paul stood, his eyes fixed in ecstatic gaze upon this mysterious island. To his delight, the crew resolved to await a breeze upon its shores and got into their boats for the purpose. They took Paul with them, and whilst the sailors rambled about in pursuit of wild figs, Paul was examining its habitableness, and conceived a strong desire of leading a solitary life upon it.

On his return from Rome he went to see about the feasibility of his longings, and walked on from Civita Vecchia to Corneto. Here he was entertained hospitably by the Augustinians for one night, and next morning he set off in the hopes of reaching the mountain before night. He wandered through a vast and dreary solitude that day, with no other road to guide him than some deep cart-ruts which led him into hay fields and corn

fields as often as they advanced him towards the end of his journey. He was benighted at length, and had to sleep in a barn where he was bitten by mosquitoes. The next day he arrived in Portercole, which is a town on the mainland at the foot of Mount Argentaro. He went to see the parish priest here, and told him the object of his coming, and the intention he had of retiring to the mountain to follow out his rule. "All in good time," replied the priest, "there is a hermitage and church upon the island, and nobody in possession of them at present." Paul went upon the island a second time, he wandered through its groves of myrtle and bay, passed by its cliffs, and was led by its sloping meadows into its nicely wooded groves. In one of those latter, upon the ruins of an old monastery, arose the hermitage of the Annunciation. Monte Argentaro is supposed to have been the habitation of those three holy monks, of whom S. Gregory relates in his dialogues, that they raised a dead man to life in the presence of one Quadragesimus, a sub-deacon, whilst they were making a pilgrimage to the tomb of the apostles. It is also supposed to have been visited by Saint Fabiola. It was holy ground, and Paul was filled with the idea of reclaiming it once more from wildness and bringing it back to its pristine uses.

He found in the hermitage some small half-dilapidated cells. The little church was dismantled and uncared for, and there he saw a picture of the Annunciation, which, although covered with mould, reminded him of his vision, and he accordingly determined to come and keep it company. He felt about as if in want of something, in one of those peculiar states of mind which psychology cannot account for—in which we feel that we have lost,

or mislaid, or forgotten something but cannot exactly tell what it is. With some careful searching we at length find it out. So it was with Paul ; he searched his memory, and the words of John Baptist, when he parted from him in Genoa, came into his mind. That was it ; he was not content without his faithful companion, and he resolved that moment to see that his brother should receive the habit and come with him to Monte Argentaro. In the meantime he must get the consent of the Bishop in whose diocese the hermitage was situated.

Paul stayed a few days upon the mountain, living upon the few crusts he brought with him, and the wild grapes and figs which he found in his rambles. He came down to Portercole again, and was received into their monastery by the Minims, or Fathers of S. Francis of Paula : their superior became Paul's confessor for some time afterwards. He left Portercole and went to Pitigliano, the residence of the Bishop of Soana. As Paul was journeying on through the marshes of Sienna he met a priest, and asked him could he tell him where the parish priest lived. "I am the parish priest," drily answered the ecclesiastic, "and what do you want with me ?" "I would humbly solicit shelter for the night," replied the Saint. "Why, one meets so many rogues now-a-days, and you know one spoils a thousand," replied his reverence. "Well," replied the Saint, "I am certainly capable of any manner of mischief, but I hope the grace of God will preserve me from doing any this time." He said this in such a humble, sweet tone that the parish priest received him and treated him very kindly. The next day Paul arrived in Pitigliano, but the Bishop was away in Pienza, fifty miles off. Paul went there and

found his lordship at last, who was very glad to give him permission to take up his abode on the holy mountain. Our Saint returned, then, by way of Pisa and Leghorn. There he embarked for charity, and had to sleep in a cabin full of untanned hides, and make quarantine there also before he arrived in Genoa.

It was now nearly a year since Paul put on the habit, and he went to the Bishop of Alessandria, Mgr. Gattinara, to give an account of how the interval had been spent. The Bishop was delighted to embrace his spiritual child once more, and heard with thrilling interest the account of his adventures and disappointment in Rome. What was his surprise to find that, instead of being disheartened Paul begged his lordship to give the habit to his brother John Baptist also, and then to give both leave to go to Monte Argentaro. The first request the Bishop had no difficulty in granting, but he very much regretted the second, as his diocese was about to lose two such excellent men. He gave his permission, however, as he recognised in the matter the finger of God. John Baptist was overjoyed at the good news; he prepared at once, and on the 28th November, 1721, he also received a habit like his brother's from the Bishop's hands.

The brothers returned, then, to S. Stefano, where they continued the pious and mortified life described in a former chapter, until the severest part of the winter was passed. When the inhabitants of Castellazzo heard that they were about to lose the holy brothers, there was a general commotion in the town. One would imagine that every house had lost a beloved inmate by death, such was the grief and gloom spread over the place. Those especially who had been reclaimed from an evil

life by Paul's exhortations, were loud in their lamentations. The wonder was that they did not turn out in a body and retain them by main force.

Paul consoled them, and when he had spoken a few words to them, all gave way and allowed him to depart with their best wishes and prayers. He wrote a long letter which he sent to his own family. In this letter he recommends them, in the first place, to be most exact in observing the commandments of God and His Church, then to approach the sacraments frequently, often to make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and to our Lady's chapels, not to pass a day without meditating for half-an-hour, or, at least, for a quarter, upon the Passion of Our Lord. He then gives them a number of ejaculations which they may repeat during the day, at their work, in their walks, and even now and again in their recreations. He recommends them to read a portion of some spiritual book every day, to have great compassion for the poor, be just in their dealings, slow in contracting debts, and quick in paying those which necessity may force them into occasionally. With renewing warmly the precept of our Lord, "Love one another," placing them in the wounds of Jesus and under the protection of Mary, he bids them an affectionate adieu.

On the first Sunday of Lent, in the year 1722, the two brothers set off to Genoa. They embarked for Civita Vecchia, and arrived there in due time ; but, on account of the quarantine, they were not able to resume their journey until Wednesday in Holy Week. They wished to receive the Holy Communion in Portercole the next day, and made all the haste they could to arrive there in time. Night overtook them within fifteen miles of

the town, and they were obliged to sleep beside a hedge. When they awoke in the morning, their hair was covered with hoar-frost. Their long fast and comfortless rest notwithstanding, they arrived in Portercole just in time for High Mass, and had the pleasure of receiving our Lord. They went, after Mass, to see the parish priest, who knew Paul, and he requested them to stay in his place until Easter Day. They accepted the priest's invitation, but spent nearly all the time in the church. They went to visit the Sepulchre, after they had a little refreshment, on Thursday; and remained kneeling before it until the Mass of the Presanctified, next morning.

A difficulty was thrown in the way of their immediate possession of the hermitage. They had to get the consent of the Governor, who was a Spanish General named Espejo e Vera. They went to Orbetello on Monday to see him, and met him as he was coming out of the church after benediction. They saluted him, and he saw that they wanted something. "Who are you?" he said, "and where are you going to?" Paul replied, "We are two poor brothers, and we feel ourselves called by the good God to do penance on Monte Argentaro." The Governor gave them the required permission without any difficulty. Paul thought now that he ought to present his brother to the Bishop of the place, and that they ought to get his lordship's blessing to begin with; accordingly they went to Pitigliano, and the Bishop most cordially granted them what they required. They then ascended the mount, and took possession of their hermitage.

Let us take a brief review of what Paul had gone through in one year and about two months. He must

have walked hundreds of miles on foot, without even the poor luxury of sandals, exposed to heat and cold without the smallest covering on his head. We ask ourselves what is all this for? Why so many privations? Why put himself in the way of so many rebuffs, insults, and injuries? Ah! the Spirit of God is not a spirit of sitting down quietly to let the world move round to your notice. It is a spirit of burning zeal, which sets the soul on fire, and gives it no rest except it be active in promoting His service according to the tenor of its inspirations. If Paul underwent all this in order to raise the material fortune of the house of Danei, he should be applauded for his sacrifice of self. Well, it is only fair that he should be applauded, in at least the same proportion for having done so much for a higher and a nobler purpose. One could not see, then, the meaning of his leaving Castellazzo and coming to Monte Argentario. But beside the propriety of leaving his own home, and detaching himself more thoroughly from all earthly ties, when we look back from this date and see what Monte Argentario has been to our Order, we cannot dissociate it from the idea that we owe more to that sacred spot than any other on which a house of ours has ever been built.

The life led by these holy solitaries was more angelic than human. They spent several hours every morning in their little church, employed either in meditation or in chanting the praises of God. They then went out into the woods to study, to hide themselves in caves or close arbours, and there give themselves more freely to contemplation or disciplining their bodies. At night they took a few hours' sleep—Paul upon the pavement of the church, and his brother upon a rough plank. They

then arose at midnight to sing matins, and gave three hours to meditation afterwards. They then retired to rest again ; but as soon as Paul heard the birds singing, ashamed at being forestalled by the little creatures in praising God, he would get upon his knees at once, in the place which served him as a bed, and begin his prayer. On Fridays Paul wore an iron belt, with sharp points into his flesh, in memory of the sufferings of our Divine Lord. They prepared for great feasts by adding to their austerities for nine days previously. They would sometimes separate and observe absolute silence for a number of days. In fact, every conceivable sort of penance was practised on Monte Argentaro in those days.

When they came to dwell in the hermitage, they brought no provisions with them except a hearth-cake and a bunch of dried grapes, and when this was consumed they fed upon the roots, herbs, and fruits which the place produced. God rewarded their trust in His providence after a short trial, for a pious lady of Orbetello sent them now and again a hamper of beans, which they moistened in a well and ate. In a short time, hunters and robbers who roved about the island, and heard the hymns and psalms of the hermits, spread the report of their sanctity far and wide, and ever after they had to refuse much of what benefactors brought them. They never tasted anything but legumes and bread and water, except that on great feasts they used to colour the water with a little wine.

They never left the island except on Sundays and holidays, when they had to go to their duties and hear Mass. When Mass was over, they gave catechism in the church, and simple exhortations about prayer and

penance—Paul in Portercole, and John Baptist in Orbetello. John Baptist used to assemble the fishermen on the shore, and after some time they built a little chapel and some huts around it. This colony has since grown into the thriving little town of Porto S. Stefano.

CHAPTER X

THE BROTHERS IN GÄETA

REPORT was not idle with regard to the solitaries of Monte Argentaro. The more they loved to be alone, the more did people's curiosity increase to find out what they were doing. It was not easy to exaggerate an account of their mode of life, for the naked statement of what it was puts it to the furthest point of credibility. But then they were strange beings : praying and fasting and sleeping on the ground, and going bare in head and feet, with a miserable black tunic and a leathern belt, they must attract a great deal of attention. So they did. They were spoken of everywhere, and either sailors or merchants who had visited Orbetello and its neighbourhood carried the news of their life so far south as Gäeta. The Bishop of Gäeta, Monsignor Pignatelli, heard of them, and felt a strong inclination to have them in his diocese. He wrote Paul a letter, inviting himself and his brother to Gäeta. The Saint did not receive the proposal favourably at first ; but as he looked forward to the increase of members in his new Institute, and as the mountain did seem to favour his expectations, he resolved, after some time, to accede to the Bishop of Gäeta's request. Mgr. Salir, the Bishop of Loana, gave them leave to go, and we extract a sentence from

the letter which he wrote about them to the Bishop of Gäeta: "They are called *The Poor of Jesus*; they are clothed in a poor woollen tunic; they have no cloak no staff, no scrip—they even travel with feet bare and head uncovered; they lead a contemplative and active life." They started for Gäeta, in this guise, on the 27th June, 1723.

The Bishop of Gäeta assigned to their use a little hermitage about a mile from the town, which was said to have been inhabited once by S. Nilus, and some Basilean monks. The place was just suited to their spirit; it was divided into little cells, had a little church adjoining, and was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin under the title of the Madonna della Catena. It was already inhabited by a *romito*,* whose spirit of mortification did not go the lengths of our Saint and his brother, and a cleric who was charged by the Bishop with providing for the necessities of the holy men. They preferred to live on the voluntary offerings of the faithful, and the cleric was to see that if these failed they should be supplied from some other source. His office became a sinecure very soon, for the people were more charitable than had been supposed. The solitaries were obliged to refuse many excellent dishes, and presents of meat, fish, etc., which they never tasted. One day the Bishop sent them a pie. It was put upon the table, and the brothers, the *romito*, and the cleric sat down to dinner. Paul proposed that they should perform an act of self-denial and give the pie away

* *Romito* means literally a hermit, but it is generally used to designate one who puts on the habit of some religious order and lives by himself under no special rule.

X untasted to some poor person. This proposition was well received by John Baptist and the cleric ; but the good *romito*, who seemed to have inherited the spirit of his great predecessor, the incomparable Friar Tuck, gave in with a very ill grace. During the course of the day, the cleric gave the pie to a poor countryman who was passing by ; the *romito* was on the *qui vive*—he went through the trees, and came out upon a path where he waylaid the countryman. and ate nearly the whole of the pie. He was returning to the hermitage, smacking his lips, when he met Paul, who, to the surprise of the other two, reproved poor Tuck for his gluttony. Paul must have known of the misdemeanour supernaturally, for there was no apparent possibility of his coming to the knowledge of it otherwise.

The brothers continued in Gäeta the same course of life which they had led in Monte Argentaro—sleeping on the ground, solitude, singing the office, crucifying the flesh, and contemplation occupying them the entire day, and a greater part of the night.

They usually spent a portion of the day in manual labour, and were specially careful that everything in their little monastery should be neat and clean. Paul's spirit was not that of S. Hilarion or Blessed Labré, but rather that of S. Bernard, who said, " I have loved poverty, but dirt never." Paul's usual maxim was, " Poverty is praiseworthy, but dirt the reverse." This spirit in a cobwebbed, rickety old hermitage would give two men a good deal to do every day.

They worked for their neighbours' spiritual welfare in the best way they could. Every Sunday and festival they went to the cathedral and catechised. They

visited the sick, prepared them for the last sacraments, and did other works of charity and mercy as they came in their way. The Bishop was about to hold an ordination and he ordered Paul to give the retreat to the candidates. This was one of the most difficult duties he had been ever engaged in. Young theologians are generally more critical and squeamish with regard to sermons than their elders, for the very good reason that they do not know by experience what they undertake to judge ; and if they catch a blunder or two, they are on the way to losing the fruit of the entire discourse. Some wise priests thought it a strange thing that a rude layman, who had never gone through an academic course, should be appointed to prepare those who had just finished their preparatory studies for the priesthood. The event proved the Bishop was in the right. Never was there such a retreat as that which the humble Saint gave.

The two servants of God made a few excursions whilst their habitation proper was in Gäeta. The stillness and calm of their holy life was disturbed somewhat by a piece of news which reached them from home. They heard that a near relative of theirs was in danger of losing his soul. They both set out for Castellazzo in the month of October ; but we are not told whether they were successful in their mission. John Baptist fell ill, and Paul stayed to nurse him ; and after this they resolved to stay in the hermitage of S. Stefano until the next year. It must be somewhere about this time that S. Paul made the acquaintance of Cardinal Cienfuegos, for his Eminence was a correspondent of Paul's, and we find extracts from his

letters of this date which show them to have been much in each other's confidence.

In 1724 the two brothers set out for Gäeta again. As they were passing through Genoa, the mother of Mgr. Saporiti, the Archbishop, who saw them in the church, felt a great wish to speak with them. The Archbishop said it was only a piece of female curiosity, and not to mind. She would have her way, and accordingly had the privilege of a good talk with the holy men. Paul told the old lady, at parting, to prepare herself, for that on the next feast of S. Joseph she would die. We may imagine the surprise of the good lady when she brought this inauspicious news to her son. On the feast of S. Joseph she did die, and the Archbishop told the fact to the man who gave it in the processes. The next event recorded of Paul after his return to Gäeta is his having preached in the cathedral when the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for the forty hours. It is said that this was a most remarkable sermon and that the people said one to another, when it was over, "If we don't become saints after such a sermon as that, we never shall."

Shortly after Easter, the brothers accompanied the Bishop's secretary, a Don Tommaso Perrone, to Naples, to witness the miracle of S. Januarius. They were there on the festival day, the first Sunday in May 1724, and had the happiness to be quite near the sacred relics when the liquefaction of the blood took place, and to be admitted also to kiss them. They remained in Naples for ten days, and when they were embarking for Gäeta a great crowd of people assembled to take leave of them. The impression which remained after

their departure was that the city had been blessed by the transient visit of two saints.

Ever since the year 1694, the diocese of Troja had been presided over by the holy Bishop Mgr. Cavalieri, uncle to S. Alphonsus Liguori. It was he who replied to that saint's father, when asked to dissuade him from embracing the ecclesiastical state: "My friend, I myself have renounced the world and my inheritance in order to save my soul; do you think I would advise your son to a contrary course? Why, I should think myself deserving of damnation if I did." This good Bishop was exceedingly devout to the passion of our Lord, and had long entertained thoughts of founding a congregation in the Church which would promote a devotion which he had so much at heart. Hearing of the holy solitaries of Gäeta, it struck him that the time had arrived for carrying out his intentions, and that if he were not chosen to be the instrument of so great a work, he would, at least, assist those whom the Lord had marked out for it, by such unmistakable signs of His will, and by the fitness which they plainly showed. He wrote, therefore, to Gäeta and invited Paul and John Baptist into his diocese. They did not know what to do, at first; but Cardinal Cienfuegos and Mgr. Pignatelli, who knew Mgr. Cavalieri well, said his sanctity and fame was enough to recommend any proposition which might come from him, and they were of opinion that the brothers should accept the invitation. It strikes us as rather odd that this good and pious Bishop did not send them travelling expenses; it seemed a cool thing to invite two poor men from Gäeta, on the coast of the Mediterranean, all the way across to Troja,

which is near the Adriatic, a distance, certainly, of nearly a hundred English miles. Doubtless he would have defrayed their expenses, for he did everything for them, but Paul would not have accepted such an offer. Up to this time he had never carried a single coin since he took the habit. He begged his way wherever he went, and never accepted alms in money. Besides it was one of the provisions in the first edition of the rules that the brethren should always travel on foot from place to place. This rule was found to be so impracticable, except within very short distances, since it involved loss of time and health, and no advantage in any way, that it was changed by S. Paul himself. At this period of his religious life, he had not changed it, and consequently he observed it as far as he could.

He and John Baptist, therefore, set out for Troja, with only their breviaries hanging in bags from their girdles. They found this journey very trying. The people were not half so charitable as those they had come across heretofore. They were obliged to sleep every night in the open air, and we may imagine to what straits they were reduced in point of food, when we find that Paul actually accepted two little coins, equal to about two three-pennies, and that himself and John Baptist, who suffered from dreadful headache, in consequence of walking uncovered under an Italian sun, indulged themselves in the luxury of a pair of eggs in the next village they entered. When they arrived at Troja, they must have been footsore enough, and have stood sorely in need of rest; but the feast of S. Michael was nigh, and they were near Monte Gargano, the famous Sanctuary of the Archangel;

so, without halting at Troja they pushed on some fifty miles further, until they arrived in Monte Gargano. Here there is a cave which has been formed by nature in the shape of a church, and is dedicated to S. Michael, in consequence of an apparition which the Church commemorates on the 8th of May. When the two brothers arrived at the grotto it was just twilight. They knelt down and passed the night in prayer before the entrance of the cave. It was in this prayer that John Baptist heard those words in Latin, *Visitabo vos in virga ferrea, et dabo vobis Spiritum Sanctum*, which exercised such a power on their future destinies, and has been entwined with the dearest recollections of the primitive days of our order, as will appear in the sequel.

Having paid their devout homage at this sacred place, they returned to Troja. John Baptist was taken ill with fever, and Paul was prostrated with fatigue, on arriving at the Bishop's. His lordship welcomed them with more than a father's affection, and a few days of rest sufficed to restore them to their wonted health and spirits. The Bishop, weighed down as he was with years and infirmities, vied with the holy brothers in austerities and detachment from earthly things. They were really such a trio as could hardly be matched in Christendom at the moment. The holy brothers might have imagined the episcopal palace had been furnished according to a chapter of Paul's rule, so poor, so clean, so void of the least shadow of expensive ornament was it. The Bishop never ate but a piece of bread and a few fruits once a day; he slept on the bare boards; and made the brothers ashamed of themselves, by the other great labours

and austerities which were habitual to him, even in his old age. They became, at once, united in the closest bonds of charity ; they seemed all inspired by the same vocation ; and they communed together on the state of their souls with a confidence and an openness unknown to the greatest and most intimate friends in the world.

The Bishop assigned Paul a great work of charity—namely, the reclaiming of the most abandoned and scandalous sinners in the town. Paul set about it in great earnest ; he collected a band of young men, took a bell, and with this bodyguard, and such as joined the new procession from curiosity, they went at night into the streets of bad reputation, roused up the place with the bell, and Paul commenced preaching on a little table which was brought in the cavalcade for the purpose. This proceeding appeared very strange in the beginning, but by degrees worked incalculable benefits.

Paul showed the Bishop a copy of the Rules, and his lordship approved of them. He said to Paul, “ This work is altogether of God. You will see great things : you will find it turn out a glorious work ; but it will succeed by ways unknown to and hidden from you at present.” The Bishop then made a resolution of founding the first house of the new order in his diocese, resigning his bishopric, and entering as a novice under Paul’s direction. Death alone prevented the carrying out of these intentions.

CHAPTER XI

SECOND VISIT TO ROME

ON Christmas Eve, 1724, Benedict XIII. sent a circular to all the Bishops of the Roman province, convoking a synod for the ensuing year, and Low Sunday was fixed upon for the opening thereof. The Bishop of Troja intended to be present; Paul and John Baptist were to go with him, as they wished to gain the Indulgence of the Jubilee. The Bishop considered this the best opportunity for trying to obtain the Papal sanction for the new rules, and the three made the matter the subject of fervent prayers in the interim. Circumstances of the day, as well as ill-health, prevented his lordship from undertaking the journey to Rome; but to supply for the want of his support to their petitions, he gave them letters to several of the cardinals and other great dignitaries. The leaves-taking was an affecting one—one of those in which the parties somehow prognosticate that they are never to meet again.

Paul and John Baptist undertook the journey to Rome with light hearts and bright prospects. They had the most sublime intentions and the most unselfish motives, perhaps, of any two pilgrims who visited the capital of the Christian world on that year. They did not mix with their devotional journey any human considerations, and the holy curiosity which shortens

the way to Rome for all Catholics who go there for the first time, had no longer any weight, with Paul at least. He was in Rome before, and although his experiences of that visit would have damped the ardour of another, for him it was but a cross which he had relished, and the promise of another which was sure to be dearer to his soul on account of its additional bitterness. If human hopes could weigh much with him, he had plenty of them to rely on. He had a pocketful of letters from one who was respected as an oracle, and regarded as a saint in the Roman court. His greatest friends, Cardinal Cienfuegos and Mgr. Pignatelli, were likely to be there; and he might count upon all this as an assurance that he would not be hurled from the steps of the Vatican palace with the same ignominy as he had been four years before. It is singular, however, that all these grounds of hope, strong as they appear, were not the main props which supported him afterwards.

The distance to Rome from Troja, about one hundred and fifty English miles, was travelled by the two brothers in the usual way. On their arrival, when passing through the Strada delle Quattro Fontane, they accidentally met Monsignor (afterwards Cardinal) Crescenzi. He was struck by their modest demeanour and penitential garb, and stopped to ask them where they came from, who they were, and what brought them to Rome. Having heard their answers, he was silent, and went his way. A few days after this, he saw them in S. Peter's, and remarked their extraordinary recollection as they prayed before the altar. He called them aside, and entered into a long talk with them. His kindness and apparent interest so won upon them that Paul con-

fided to him his whole history, and the object which he had, besides that of gaining the Indulgence, in coming to Rome. Crescenzi became their friend at once, and remained so till the end of his life. A few days after this, he introduced them to Cardinal Corradini.

Cardinal Corradini was famous as a man of great learning and piety, and distinguished above all for his love of the afflicted poor. A priest of his household, Don Emilio Lami, hired a house, where poor creatures afflicted with leprosy and other cutaneous diseases might be tended. The Cardinal helped him, and between them they contrived to organize a little hospital capable of containing from forty to fifty cases. He one day took Cardinal Orsini to visit this hospital, and when the latter was raised to the pontificate as Benedict XIII., he built the hospital of S. Gallicano, for the thorough accommodation of this class of patients, a moiety of whom could not be cared for in the little hospice of F. Lami. This hospital was in process of erection at the time of Paul's second visit to Rome. The servants of God found many friends in Rome this time, among the rest Mgr. Pignatelli, Bishop of Gäeta; he introduced to them Mgr. Mezzabarba, Patriarch of Alexandria, and several others. They were in want of nothing, for all their new friends vied in offering them hospitality. They chose to lodge with F. Lami, awaiting the auspicious audience of his Holiness, which was to decide their future course.

This was not far off. Innocent was made aware of the visit of the two poor Piedmontese to Rome; Cardinal Corradini and others dropped a word or two

about such a small matter, in their recreations with his Holiness, and he was inclined to listen to their request, and, as Father of the Faithful, second every project which should advance the reign of grace upon earth. Paul did not pretend to the honour of a formal audience. His idea was to go like a poor man, and see if the Pope would send him away or not. He heard that the Pope would be in the church of Sta. Maria in Dominica, called La Navicella, on a certain day, to look at the repairs which were being made there, and he determined to go for the papal blessing, and then, if he were allowed, make his request. The two brothers went to the church in good time, and waited for the Pope. Waiting for the Pope creates strange sensations. The idea of a Catholic waiting for the head of the Church, the Vicar of Christ, the seat of infallibility the holder of the keys of heaven! It is an anxious time, as all know who have gone through it, and counted the minutes, and thought them wonderfully long. Paul with his lively faith, must have felt overpowering sensations. He did not enjoy the privilege of living in a country where the Pope is reviled, and his prerogatives questioned by many, denied by more, and mocked by more still. He was not trained in a school where libels upon Pontiffs were considered fair and profitable reading for juvenile minds. Paul had nothing to qualify his pure and perfect faith. If those who are brought up with all the above-named advantages, and with a spice of scepticism in their composition into the bargain, have had indescribable sensations while waiting for an audience, or even for a sight of the Pope, what must have been the flow of ideas which ran through the

minds of the two brothers as they knelt in that church, and tried to keep their devotion from being divided between the altar and the coming event? They were just what we might have expected. The Pope came, and Paul and John Baptist fell upon their knees and tried to kiss his feet. They then arose, and Paul essayed to speak. He had arranged his ideas, and prepared the proper words for his petition; but when he came to the point his mind was a complete blank. He could not put two words together, and his wonderment and confusion were such as he never felt before. His Holiness perceived this, and in a kind fatherly smile asked them if they wanted anything. Paul was encouraged; he went through his prepared speech, told the Holy Father what he intended doing, gave an account of what had been done up to this, and asked his blessing, and permission for the prosecution of the work he had begun, the founding of the Congregation of the Passion. The Pope, who was already apprised of all this, and saw before him two perfect models of what it promised, gave at once his oral permission for assembling companions, and living according to the plan proposed to him. If any of our readers has ever experienced the unbounded pleasure which inundates the mind when in a critical moment he has, by the sweet sound of a single word, or the turning of a scale in which his chances of future happiness or misery seemed equally balanced, been answered beyond the extent of his greatest expectations, he can guess at the happiness which Paul and his brother felt at that moment. Sweet moment,—moment fraught with recollections of many happy days,—how the faithful sons

of S. Paul bless that moment, and love to date back even so far the provision which it made for their future happiness! This permission was granted in or about the last day of May, 1725; and from that day we can date properly the origin of the Congregation of the Passion.

A few words of explanation will not be amiss here. We unconsciously contrast Paul's first and second visits to Rome, and are in straits about accounting for their different issues. The first time he was chased, the second time he was benignly heard—the first time he got nothing but a severe reprimand, the second time he got more than he expected; the first time he left Rome with what should ever depress any one but himself, the second time he left with a blessing which could have encouraged the most desponding. Whence arose this difference? Oh, answers our fault-finding reader, he had more to recommend him the second time than his mere sanctity; he had letters from bishops and kind words from cardinals. Oh, we answer, that is not it. The first time he saw only an official, perhaps a bumptious servant, and everybody knows these gentry are far more important than their masters, especially when they have a poor man before them who has nothing but his sanctity to recommend him. If he saw the Pope, then, it might have been just as it turned out now. Then, his letters and good words did him very little good except to remove from the Pope's mind the possibility of suspecting him to be a fanatic or an impostor. If the Pope were to lose his time in listening to every wild scheme which hair-brained or half-witted people would bring before him

every day, it is likely the interests of the Universal Church could not be so well attended to: so that, looking at both sides of the picture, we can calmly and reasonably come to the conclusion that it was all consonant to sound judgment and, at the same time, not derogatory to that blessed See which canonizes the beggar and excommunicates the powerful but disobedient emperor. Rome is proverbially slow in arriving at her decisions, but Rome has the long experience of eighteen centuries, and the protection of an all-wise ruling Providence, and the strongest promises of Divine protection to guard her from unwary steps and guide her in all that is wisest and holiest.

CHAPTER XII

THE FRUITS OF THE VISIT

THE Papal permission concluded their stay in Rome. They had nothing else to wait for now, and it was their duty to gather what fruits they were able from it. Few liked to be numbered in their society up to this moment ; for, although their hard life might repel many who would like to be religious, and, at the same time, manage to get to heaven in a coach-and-four, it had its attractions for several who were persuaded that if they gave up the world at all, they should do so in good earnest, and not by compromises and half-ways. Even then, however, many would not like to lead a life which was not sanctioned by the Pope ; and, as long as a religious institute was not properly welded into the Church's system by the only authority which could do so, it would never spread very widely. The perseverance of Paul and his brother under those discouragements is very remarkable, and it must strike us as the more so when we see how many long years yet intervened before their hopes were properly realised. The Church's sanction being only permissive, she required to see a number of men living under the new rule, and to know its practical working through their experience before giving the formal, or even verbal approbation. Paul knew this, and went off at once to carry out the intentions of the Church. This age

of advertising and puffing can scarcely restrain its laughter when it finds the first two Passionists retiring to their hermitage at Gäeta instead of touting for recruits ; and when they were becoming too much known, then retiring into still greater solitude. It was not man's way of setting about things, at all events.

To the hermitage at Gäeta they returned once more, and Paul wrote the good news to his great friend Mgr. Cavalieri. The Bishop began at once to look for a house in his diocese which was likely to suit Paul's taste, by its being neither too far from a town, nor too far in the heart of it to nullify either department of the twofold spirit of the new institute. He was also arranging plans for resigning his crozier, and taking the habit along with a priest who had a like spirit with himself. Paul was joined by two postulants very soon ; one was a priest, the other the cleric procurator, Ricinelli, mentioned in a former chapter. The *romito* of Gäeta, Fra. Biagio, disappears from the annals henceforward, and his name can doubtless be found in connection with a better larder than Paul's. The solitude which reigned around the place, and the silent lives led in it, suggested to Paul the apt designation of *Ritiro* or *Retreat*, which has been adopted by the Passionists as the genuine name of their houses. This solitude was not destined to last.

Two or three little incidents brought the servants of God before the public, as we would say, and their hermitage became the resort of crowds. The first of these incidents was the case of a married lady, who was supposed to be a great saint ; it was reported that she was supremely detached from all earthly cares

(household perhaps included), that she spent long hours in prayer, and even the story ran that she held colloquies with the Mother of God. She was brought to see Paul, and, after a short conference, he told her she was deluded by the devil, and going straight to perdition. This judgment was very badly received both by the woman and her friends, but a few days were sufficient to give full proof of Paul's wisdom; in what manner this occurred we are not told.

A crowd of fisherman's wives came up to the hermitage another day crying for their husbands, who had not returned at the proper time, and asked Paul to pray for them. He told them not to be uneasy, that their husbands were in a certain creek, and would return in a few days with a splendid take of fish. The prediction was verified. Another batch of sailors' wives came up to S. Maria della Catena, soon after the last were made happy, and told the Saint that their husbands had embarked on a skiff some days before, and that they had not appeared within the proper date. Paul told them to return in three days' time for an answer. He and John Baptist began to pray fervently for the poor mariners, and when the women came according to appointment, he told them that their husbands were now safe; but that they had a narrow escape from falling into the hands of pirates on the coast of Barbary. The return of the men confirmed this, and on comparing notes they found that their deliverance from danger, which was all but miraculous, occurred just at the time the Saint was praying for them. They all went in a body to thank the holy

men ; but Paul told them that they owed it all to the intercession of Our Lady.

Such things as those happening among a simple people have wonderful power over their minds. They venerated Paul and John as saints, and would very likely have put them side by side with S. Anthony in their devotions, if Paul had not taken measures to prevent it. He saw that there was little respite or peace to be found in his solitude, and determined to change to somewhere else. The priest who had joined them grew tired of their mode of life, and left them. The cleric still remained.

When Paul had resolved to remove, he did not see where he had best turn to. He thought of the hospital of S. Gallicano in Rome, which had been just opened, and wanted the assistance which he and his companions could afford. Before taking any step, he wrote to Mgr. Cavalieri, who disapproved of this project, which appeared to him contrary to the spirit of Paul's institute, and offered him a house in his own diocese. Paul accepted the advice of the prelate on the first point, but for some reason or other refused to go to Troja again. From a sentence in the letter of Mgr. Cavalieri, which says, " We must hope against hope, our salvation is nearer now than when we believed," we conclude that Paul was losing heart in his work. He met with some opposition from the proprietors of the hermitage, who were about to shackle him with conditions incompatible with his work. All these things put together showed him the prudence of taking up his sojourn somewhere else.

There was a sanctuary on the top of a high moun-

tain near Gäeta, dedicated to the Madonna della Civita. It was under the care of some holy priests, and Paul and his companions obtained the Bishop's leave to go there and subject themselves to the direction of a holy priest named Don Erasmo Tuccinardi. This new superior moderated their austerities, and assigned them some manual labour every day. The two brothers excelled in obedience, and their love was exercised in curing each other of their defects with a freedom and authority which saints alone know how to use without abusing. Paul was one day recounting to a holy visitor some of the graces he had received, and the blessings God was bestowing upon them in the midst of their difficulties; John Baptist overheard him, and said, "Yes, Paul, you are always at it." Poor Paul stopped the conversation instantly, bowed to his companions, and went off to the church to atone for his fault. Another day John Baptist contradicted Paul in an affair of very little consequence; he was rebuked mildly by his senior brother, and instantly went on his knees and begged his pardon. It is a pity that chroniclers have not tried to find out more traits of their manner of proceeding in what may be called their domestic interviews. *Mirabilia* are good enough in their way, but we should certainly prefer to learn more of the hard practical working which rendered them worthy of the greater favours. Humility would hide all from us, and if there had not been so many witnesses to the miracles, we should not have known of them either.

It was whilst in the Civita they heard of the death of Mgr. Cavalieri. He died as he had lived, in the

peace and blessing of God, and in the midst of his duties. He had commissioned a Jesuit Father, named Crivelli, to seek out a house which would suit for a nucleus of the new Order; and whilst this Father was busy in the Bishop's commission, death put an end to all present hopes of its being carried out. They had been only two months in their new residence when this event occurred, that is, on the 11th August, 1726.

The combined counsels of the Bishop of Gäeta, Don Erasmo, and the two brothers, decided that the latter should go to Rome and plant the sapling of the future institute in the very heart of Christendom itself. Providence had other designs in store for them. The new hospital was just opened, and Cardinal Corradini was appointed its chief patron. He was looking around him for a proper staff of nurses and directors, and it was like a message from heaven to hear of the two holy men's arrival in town. He immediately persuaded them to accept of some position in the hospital. They were constituted overseers of the attendants, and had to reprove, to exhort, in season and perhaps out of season. They gave their services gratis, and their disinterestedness and zeal were not very strong passports to the affections of their selfish collaborators. The two men were assailed by slander, abuse, and even injuries calculated to make themselves more easily felt. Their duties around the sick-bed were anything but agreeable to their keen sensibility, and the director, F. Lami, treated them for some time with harshness, and seemed to believe everybody's story concerning them. A short trial proved to him what genuine sanctity the servants of God possessed. He began

to admire them and reverence them, and turned the tide of opinion in the place so completely in their favour, both in the hospital and outside, that Cardinal Corradini resolved to promote them to sacred Orders.

There were some difficulties to contend with here. Mgr. Cavalieri had long ago proposed to raise them to the priesthood, but their humility stood in the way. Their hospital duties seemed ill to accord with the sort of life to which they felt themselves specially called, and they could not find a title for their Order if they did not dedicate themselves by vow to the service of the sick, after the manner of the Religious of S. Camillus. Thus they were not strongly moved to either. The Cardinal managed the matter for them; he got the Pope to arrange a title for them on their promising to the sick their perpetual service, and his authority overruled all the scruples they had on the score of unworthiness or incapacity.

CHAPTER XIII

HIS ORDINATION—AND OTHER CHANGES

PAUL and his brother had made little of the usual preparation for Orders; they had not gone through an academic course, passed respectable examinations, nor taken any degrees. They had done better things; they had spent many years in the practice of heroic virtues, and at least five in a discipline far exceeding college life in its strictness and regularity. They were deficient, of course, in regular theological knowledge, although they must have studied some books in order to be capable of acquitting themselves as they did in the duties of catechising and preaching. The Cardinal dispensed with the usual course, although the humble and obedient brothers would have no objection to range themselves in a class of boys at the age of thirty-three, like their venerable predecessor, S. Ignatius of Loyola. Their duties in the hospital prevented their attendance at the lectures of the Roman schools; but the end was attained by their studying for a year under the tutorship of a F. Dominic, Minor Observantine.

On the 6th February, 1727, they were tonsured, and on the 22nd and 23rd of the same month they received the minor Orders. They were ordained subdeacons on the 12th April, deacons on the 1st May, and on the 7th June of the same year, the Ember Saturday of Pentecost, Benedict XIII. himself ordained them

priests. The two first of the Sacred Orders were conferred by the Pope's Vicegerent, Monsignor Baccari, in the Church of S. John Lateran. They made the retreats, previous to their reception, in the novitiate of the Jesuits on Monte Cavallo, and in the house of the Vincentians on Monte Citorio. It was remarked that when the Pope was imposing hands upon F. Paul for the last time, he said the *accipe Spiritum Sanctum* with peculiar emphasis, and when it was over, said aloud, *Deo gratias*. This was taken notice of because it is not prescribed in the pontifical, and must have been the expression of the Pontiff's satisfaction at having ordained so worthy and so holy a subject. In the same chapel, 125 years after this date, the decree of his beatification was published.

On the feast of the Holy Trinity, both said their first masses. Cold must be the heart, indeed, which is not moved with emotion at the first mass. It is that dread moment, when a man offers up in his own hands the Son of God to the Father for the first time. He sees his life, his hope, his all, in his hands, and that he has power to call Him, and that His honour whilst there is committed to his keeping. The smallest faith must realise these sensations to the newly ordained priest. What must be the measure of lively faith in that soul which had lived almost upon faith up to that very moment? A soul which seemed to touch and feel the very truths of our holy religion, so clearly did he apprehend them and so long could he remain absorbed in their mere contemplation. Paul said his first mass, of course, with that extra measure of delight which his perfection would lead us to anticipate. He is said to

have received some special graces which made him ever look back to that event with, "Oh, what a sight!"

Custom or habit never brought F. Paul less fervour in celebrating mass. To the end of his life he had the gift of tears, and his humility made him continually repeat mentally to himself, as he approached the altar, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the Son of Man shall be delivered into the hands of a sinner." Often at the mysterious parts of the sacrifice was his face seen to glow with heavenly beauty. Often was he raised aloft in the air whilst contemplating his Incarnate God as he lay upon the corporal, and often again was he enveloped in a strange but lucid cloud. Such was the scene once witnessed and attested in the processes by an opulent and charitable man, named Dominico Costantini, who was serving the Saint's mass in the church of Sta. Lucia, in Corneto.

F. Paul was very particular with regard to the rubrics and ceremonies of the mass, and nothing offended him so much as to see the furniture of the altar either torn or stained. He considered it an offence in the whole congregation if their houses, and especially the pastor's, were like palaces, whilst the house of God was suffered to remain like a stable.

The brothers divided their time, after their ordination, between the service of the sick and the further study of theology.

It seems they had not written home for some time, and their parents, uneasy about their welfare, sent off their brother Joseph to make inquiries, and bring them home word of their doings. Joseph traced them to the hospital, and was surprised to find that they

had been just ordained priests. He was thrown into a fever by the fatigue of his journey, and one day, when his pain seemed beyond endurance, he begged F. Paul to put his hand on his head. The father did so and he was cured. Joseph had scarcely arrived in Castellazzo with all the joyful tidings which he picked up in the great city, and the great things he had seen and heard of his brothers, when a gloom was cast over their humble household. Luca Danei, our Saint's father, happened to be accidentally pushed in the street one day; he fell, and the hurt brought him to the grave in a few days. He received the last rites of the Church with great devotion, and extracted a promise from his children that they should lay aside anything like resentment, and never attempt to revenge what he considered an accident, on the cause of his death. This sad news reached Rome on the 16th August, and Paul's first care was to write home to his afflicted mother: "The news of the death of our dear father has caused us deep grief, but we have bowed our heads to the adorable will of God. My dearest mother, let us rather rejoice, for I hope with certainty that our good father is now enjoying the bliss of heaven. To-morrow and the two following days we shall both say mass for the repose of his soul." The letter concluded with a promise of their coming home soon in order to adjust the affairs of the family. In two months' time they were able to fulfil their promise. They arrived in Castellazzo after an absence of four years, to gladden the hearts of a people who had loved them, and now were rejoiced at seeing them priests. They remained about two months. Father Paul arranged

the little affairs of the family, and in the month of December they both left their father's house again never to return, for this was their last visit.

The mother of our Saint soon followed her beloved consort to a better world, and left behind her a holy and spotless memory. Father Paul dealt with his family as if he had been completely dead to feelings of flesh and blood. Were they in need of his assistance towards their salvation, he was ready, at a moment's notice, to cross the Appenines, and leave footprints in the snow stained with his blood, in order to afford it ; but their temporal needs he supplied only by prayers. They were a respectable family, reduced to a state approaching real poverty—they were often unable to supply their little wants, and even their poor table was often without their scanty meal. When Father Paul became the spiritual father of a numerous band of missionaries, when his name resounded from the Alps to Otranto, and from the pillars of Hercules to the city of Syracuse ; when the great and the rich and the fervent of Italy, even up to the Pope himself, regarded him as a saint and lodged their secrets with him as a guide and counsellor, how easily might he by a single word raise his family in the world, or at least make their hard life a little more comfortable ! That word he never spoke. They were above absolute want, and that was enough for him. His Lord was poor, and Paul was poor, and he loved poverty, had tasted its sweets, and he was not going to deprive his relations of blessings which it had cost himself so much to purchase. He saw how the raising up of poor relations from the state in which Providence had placed them,

had wrought incalculable evils, scandals, wranglings, oppressions, intrigues, and misfortunes—everywhere, but especially in the fair field of holy Church herself. He left them, therefore, in their own sphere, and used to write them letters which exhorted them to value it and be content in it. Here is an extract from one of them: “Believe me, my dear brothers and sisters, you are the most fortunate people in the world; poor in this life, but rich in a faith which will make you rich indeed in heaven. Do you know why God leaves you to contend against so many trials and miseries? In order that you may thereby secure your eternal salvation. Brief and transitory is the day of suffering, but long and lasting is the day of eternal joy. Courage, then. God will never abandon you, and you shall always have what is necessary.” F. John Baptist wrote in the same strain. Once, indeed, they were in great distress, and knowing that it was useless to apply to either of his brothers, Joseph Danei wrote to Father John Mary of S. Ignatius, then one of our provincials, and begged him to do something for them. He did what he could, but was obliged to take good care that F. General S. Paul of the Cross should never know of it. He let the dead bury their dead, and when we know that he was most affectionate, as a son and a brother, we may understand that to be in him a virtue, which, in another, might be open to criticism. Were he a man of the world, who had become rich and powerful by a tide of unwonted prosperity, it would have been cruel neglect in him to be deaf to the voice of misery from the bosom of his own family. But, being a religious, and the founder of a religious order, he was

obliged, in sheer justice, to prevent a mixing together of the world and the cloister, which would have secularized his subjects, and not have benefited their friends.

Difficulties clustered round the duties of the two holy priests in the hospital of S. Gallicano. By a clause in the bull of its foundation, it was provided that a body of six priests should undertake the conduct of the hospital, and spend two years in a school of surgery in order to fit themselves for the slight but painful operations which had sometimes to be performed on infants, who suffered much from cutaneous affections. This bull was expedited when S. Paul was on the visit to his family; when they returned to Rome they were obliged to do what they could in order to carry it out; but neither of them was suited for operations. Paul said, "We never had heart enough for such a great work of charity." They did what they could but that was little. Besides, they were both subject to the tertian fever, and medical men were of opinion that nothing but change of air and occupation could cure them. Cardinal Corradini, having weighed these matters, and casting into the scale a scruple which he must have felt in crossing the Saint's legitimate vocation and ordering him to undertake a work for which he had no other qualification than boundless charity and kindness, came to the conclusion that it was better to release them from their promise of serving the sick and allow them to return to their missionary and solitary life. The necessary forms were gone through, and S. Paul and his brother were free to pursue the course for which Providence had prepared them.

Here they are now, at the door of the hospital—

how different from the day in which they came there first in 1725 to claim a night's lodging. They have in less than three years served an apprenticeship to a new life, organized the staff of officials and nurses in a new hospital, received priests' orders, not one of which things they dreamt of when they came to Rome. They never took the initiative in any one of these changes, they simply obeyed their lawful superiors for the time being, and all had been accomplished.

CHAPTER XIV

MONTE ARGENTARO—THE FIRST NOVICIATE

THE life of S. Paul of the Cross properly commences with this chapter. Up to the moment in which he and F. John Baptist fixed, for the second time, upon Monte Argentaro as their future residence, he was what might be called in a state of pupilage. We have no strong development of individual character or individual sanctity up to this date. Obedience, and humility, and prayer, and mortification we have in great abundance ; but these are properties common to all saints, from our Lord Himself—whose history for the first thirty years of His life is written in one sentence—"He went down to Nazareth, and was subject to them"—down to the last of the canonized. Paul is now thirty-four years of age ; his history, as we have seen, was almost uniform up to this. Now and then a gleam went forth to show that he was no ordinary man, but the even tenor, those lists of every day acts and words which make up our estimate of the man, were simply repetitions. A bishop called him here and he went, another called him back and he returned. He was told to do this and he did it, he was found fault with rarely, and he acquiesced ; he was sought after and honoured, and he fled. He prayed and he fasted, he preached and he converted, he retired into solitude and he came out with might and power from above like the great

Jewish lawgiver—but one saw nothing particularly characteristic in all this. We do not want a bare chronicle of holy deeds in the lives of saints, we want more; we want the distinctive spirit in which these are done, we want to understand how the words of the wise man—“*non est inventus similis illi qui conservaret legem excelsi*”—apply to the saint. All this laudable curiosity on our part will be amply gratified in the course of this history, but before descending to particulars, it is perhaps well to give a key to their proper reading.

This is specially desirable since it is only now that we can contemplate F. Paul working under the direction of the Spirit of God, coming to him direct without passing through any earthly channel except such as would not interfere with its proper transmission. He becomes now, what is called in earthly language, his own master. He begins to flourish in the sanctity which he has been acquiring in those long years of trial, and he has to flourish in such a manner as to be able to say in fact, if not in word, to his followers, “Be ye imitators of me as I am of Christ.” To produce this effect, in the manner which the Saint’s position demanded, was no easy matter. It was not enough to be exact in the observance of rules, a good disciplinarian, with sweetness enough to blunt the edge of the carefully worded reprimand and courage enough to withstand the force of human respect and human malevolence. Paul could not begin his foundation, as a new superior could enter upon office—the latter has a carefully-written code and time-honoured customs to guide him, whilst Paul had but the germs of the one and nothing of the other.

He had therefore to rule by example, and that example should bear upon it unmistakable marks both of sanctity, and personal sanctity as well. It is not meant that S. Paul looked to his future in this philosophic spirit and shaped his course accordingly—a politician might do that, but a saint could not. No ; he must set about it in simplicity and piety, and do it unconsciously.

The result tells us as plainly as an axiom that he has done so ; but it is difficult to find in each action the various marks of a model. Their very simplicity and holiness make us think it irreverence to scrutinize them as we would. Besides, perpetual philosophising upon the most important things usually clog the flow of an interesting narrative and tire the reader much the same as heavy descriptions in works of fiction or history. For this cause we think it quite right to set out, to the best of our power, what we conceive to be the anatomy of the spirit of S. Paul of the Cross, and leave the application of it to the reader's judgment.

The essence of his sanctity, in what it differs from that of other saints, is his great devotion to the passion of our Lord. He seems to have always lived under the very shadow of the crucifix. The influence of this upon all his actions was very significant : it deepened his compunction, it made him keenly alive to the deformity of sin, it made him clothe his very joy in a suit of mourning, and it made him be a perfect penitent, not so much on account of his own sins, as from the desire of being associated with his crucified Master in the great Atonement. His piety, therefore, had more in it of heart than of head ; he not only prayed because it was good to pray, but he prayed because

his heart was warmed unto his Master whilst he knelt like Magdalen at His sacred feet. His opposition to sin was not put forth in terror and indignation, but in the spirit of grief and sadness caused by the knowledge that the death of our Lord was therefore deprived of its fruit. And in Paul this feeling did not move him to sit down and weep, but rather to bestir himself the more. Why was the victory of the Cross so long delayed? and why does not every Christian feel on fire for its being gained? Because they did not understand its grandeur. He would therefore impress it upon them in every possible way, and what way could be more efficacious than that of bringing them to accompany our Lord in the *Via Dolorosa*! So reasoned Paul, and so he acted. His zeal was smooth, strong, untiring; but wanting in impetuosity. It sought victory for the Cross by long suffering rather than by hard fighting.

This spirit worked itself out in his government. He was full of compassion and love for the sinner, whilst the sin nearly broke his heart. The shortcomings of his own subjects, therefore, never found in him the sternness of a master, but were corrected with the sad grief of a parent. His corrections moved to compunction. He knew he had men to deal with and not angels, and he could suffer in patience that a rule which it took him many long days to lay down, might be trampled down heedlessly, or even maliciously, in a moment. He was not impatient or given to complaint if spiritual children did not advance as rapidly as they ought, but he waited in patience and long suffering for the improvement of each defect, and bore with the same equanimity the repetitions of faults which had evoked

his disapprobation. This evenness of disposition, which seemed scarcely to colour a placid and mild natural temperament, was acquired in the schooling he had received during the period of his life which we have just reviewed. When we recollect that his natural disposition was far from cold or phlegmatic, but was hot and fiery, we can see the wisdom by which he was trained.

Our Lord can be copied in various ways by his children; but the special manifestation of His Divine sanctity, which Paul chose for the exemplar of his own, was His conduct throughout His passion. This copied, as far as a resemblance could exist between a mere creature and God in a human appearance, forms the peculiar cast of Paul's sanctity, and helps us to the interpretation of his actions.

We left Paul and his brother on the door-step of the hospital at the close of the last chapter; we have now to trace their future movements. They bent their steps to Monte Argentaro on leaving Rome, and, after the usual amount of fatigues and hardships, found themselves in Portercole about the beginning of March, 1728. Here they learnt that their beloved hermitage was occupied by a *romito*, who added to the gifts of his brother of Gäeta the less amiable qualities of gruffness, selfishness, and a slight weakness for spreading false reports. There was another hermitage on the island called S. Antonio. The two brothers inspected this, and found it unsuited for anything except that of affording a poor shelter to storm-pelted cattle, or perhaps a raven's nest. They resolved then, to try if the *romito* of the Annunziata would have no objection to their

occupying a cell or two in the same house with him ; but they found him quite indisposed for anything like friendly overtures. He foamed and raged, wanted to know if they came there to supplant him, and by a show of greater austerity to attract to themselves the greater veneration of the faithful. Not only would he refuse them permission to dwell with him under the same roof, but he would do his best to chase them from the island altogether. The brothers answered not a word, but quietly retired, and took a passage for Genoa, in order to go back again to S. Stefano, near Castellazzo. There were three ships about to sail ; they raised anchor ; two of them put to sea, but that which contained our Saint and his brother would not move. They procured all sorts of appliances to do the office of the modern steam-tug, but with no effect. The sailors cursed and swore, but the ship was as immovable as a rock. S. Paul, who was praying in the captain's cabin at the time, was assured by a heavenly inspiration that he and his brother were the cause of the ship's immobility, inasmuch as it was God's will they should not leave the holy mount. They both went on deck, told the captain so, thanked him for his kindness, went on shore, and the vessel sailed away without difficulty. They returned then to the mountain, and determined to make the best of S. Antonio. Their former benefactor, Mgr. Salvi, was dead about a year, and his successor, Mgr. Palmieri, granted them permission to take possession of the dilapidated hermitage.

They found its roof was shattered, its apartments, two in number, damp and filthy, its little oratory like

a stable. They began to put it in order, and with the assistance of some kind friends soon cleaned the place up, and got it into trim for saying mass, and enabling them to go through their daily exercises with only a small amount of inconveniences in the way of draughts and unfurnished rooms. The *romito* was wild when he saw them settle in his neighbourhood, and said all manner of things against them; but, like every other evil-doer, he thereby only destroyed whatever little bit of reputation he had. It was in vain that Father Paul knelt down before him and begged his pardon, and did everything to soften him—he only hardened him the more. They resolved at length to let him alone and pray for his conversion to good sense and charity.

In the meantime the prophecy of the late Mgr. Cavalieri began to be fulfilled. He told Paul that as soon as they became priests subjects would offer themselves for the noviciate. A young man, who had heard of the holy brothers in Piedmont, travelled all the way to Monte Argentaro, and begged to be allowed to join them. F. Paul accepted him, and finding him fit for a lay brother, he gave him the habit and called him Brother John Mary. He was of great service to them, inasmuch as he attended to their domestic concerns, and left the Fathers free to pursue their studies.

In the Lent of 1729, nearly a year after their arrival in S. Antonio, the Bishop came to make his visitation in Portercole. He made inquiries concerning the holy hermits of the mount, sent for them, examined them in moral theology, and gave them faculties to hear confessions in his diocese. He also commissioned Father Paul to give a course of lectures to the people of Porter-

cole by way of preparation for their Easter duties. The crowd of penitents who flocked to S. Antonio evidenced the fruit of the extend field of their labours. Shepherds, fowlers, and hunters who paid periodic visits to the mountain, and heard, as they reclined in its arbours or grottoes, and wandered by day through its plains or fastnesses, the solemn chant of the Fathers, came to gratify their curiosity, and departed with consciences lightened, refreshed with the bread of angels, and not unfrequently instructed in the mysteries of our faith, concerning which they had hitherto lived in ignorance. From the country round about many came to the mountain, and it was one of the first of Paul's rules in their regard, that they should never be sent home fasting if the poor larder of the hermitage could afford them a breakfast. Devotion and hunger often gave persons of rank a keen relish for the simple fare and gourd of the hermits.

The people would have gone all the way, and even farther, for the Saint's blessing. Towards the decline of autumn a heavy storm was luring in the atmosphere over Portercole, which threatened grave damage to the vines and fruit-trees. The people ran up to the hermitage and begged Father Paul to come and bless their vineyards. He did so; a shower of sleet and hail fell, even after the blessing, which threatened to strip the trees to their very branches. When the shower was over they went out to see what was the harm done. They saw the leaves torn and scattered about the plain, but the fruits were all untouched, and their harvest was a most abundant one. On another occasion the Saint was passing along the shore, and he

met the master of some fishing smacks, who was very sad about his want of success. He could only say that for the last four months his boats came in empty and his nets broken ; he had, besides, contracted debts on the strength of his hopes for the season, and now found himself unable to meet his liabilities. He threw up his arms, as if in despair, and, in a peculiar tone of supplication, said : " Father Paul, will you bless my nets and the sea ? " The holy man knelt down upon the beach and prayed ; he then recited the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, told the man to have faith, and standing up he took his crucifix and blessed the nets and the sea. Such was the man's success in that single night that he was able to pay all his debts, provision his family, and send a good present of fish to the hermitage.

In May, 1730, the youngest brother of our Saint, Antonio Danei, came to visit the hermitage, and he brought with him many remembrances from Castellazzo, among the rest a handsome sum of money from the Countess of Pozzo. The Saint wrote her a letter of condolence upon the loss of a near friend, and it is in his signature to this letter that we have the first evidence of his dropping his family name and taking " Of the Cross " instead. Antonio was charmed with the holiness and simplicity of the life of his two brothers ; he wrote home all the news and entered the noviciate as a cleric. Three more joined them within a few weeks. One was a canon from Gâeta, the other a parish priest, and the third another cleric ; so that before the end of the year the community numbered seven—four priests, two clerics, and a lay brother. It was with much ado they were able to find accommoda-

tion for all in the little hermitage. They divided the two upper rooms into cells by means of curtains, and these new apartments were just large enough to contain an extended mattress. The ground floor adjoining the oratory served the double purpose of refectory and study hall ; and a shed before the door, built with boughs and thatched with straw, served for kitchen.

The life they led in this new mansion, which was called a Retreat, was singularly austere. They were clothed in a simple tunic of coarse black cloth, the roughest and cheapest that could be procured ; they had not yet indulged in the luxury of sandals and biretta. They used no better food than legumes and herbs, except fish occasionally, when they received it in alms ; and even this poor food was badly seasoned, and palatable only to extreme hunger. They fasted every day except on Sundays and the principal feasts, and they ate meat three times a year, on Christmas Day, Easter Sunday, and the Assumption. When our holy founder wished to give something extra by way of a *gaudeamus*, he allowed eggs and whitemeats and wine. They arose after a few hours' sleep, at midnight, to chaunt matins ; after which they made an hour's meditation, and four times a week took the discipline. Then they retired to their cells, and some slept, some prayed, and some studied until an early hour in the morning, when they assembled in the oratory to sing Prime and Tierce ; after another hours' meditation, the priests said Mass. When their thanksgiving was over, they retired into the wood to study, prepare their sermons, or pray, as the case might be. The lay brother alone remained at the retreat. They

returned, by signal, a little before noon, sung Sext and None, then took their repast, and afterwards recreated for a little. After Vespers they went out again into the groves about and along the sea-shore, and as the evening closed they returned to the retreat for Compline. They then made another hour's meditation, and came to the refectory for their collation. After this they conversed together on holy subjects for a short time, then said night prayers, and threw themselves upon their hard beds, just as they were, until the matins bell called them to choir again. Such was the daily life of our first fathers. It is very nearly the same as that which Passionists lead now ; only a few points have been modified, but this was done whilst the rules were undergoing the process of approbation in Rome.

Paul was always cheerful, and animated his companions to bear the yoke of holy discipline with joy. He practised many extra mortifications, which he thought were only known to his confessor, Father John Baptist, but which the religious found out by degrees. They found that he often spent the night in prayer between two rocks until matins ; that he used severe instruments of penance in grottoes, when he thought he could neither be heard nor seen ; and he confessed himself, in after life, that the penances he practised in the first noviciate told upon him to the end. An instance of his extraordinary penance has been given to the world by the chance excursion of a hunter. He one day saw something in a quickset hedge, and prepared his musket to bring it down. When he came within shot of the object, what was his surprise to find that it

was a man rolling himself naked in the thorns, which had pierced his flesh and covered him with blood. This was no other than S. Paul of the Cross. Father Fulgentius of Jesus, one of the first Passionists, said—“ Oh, Father Paul practised penances which shall be known to the world only on the day of judgment.”

Like all the saints who were severe to themselves, Paul was tender to others. He always considered himself the last among his brethren, and his humility increased with his advances in virtue. It does not require much ascetic theology to explain what is so hard to be understood ;—viz., how it is that Saints, so innocent and so holy, can look upon themselves as the greatest of sinners. Just as S. Paul did. They see the deformity of the slightest sin, and from small sins they are never perfectly free, in such a light that they are shocked and astonished that the earth does not swallow them up for falling into them.

The noviciate seemed now so flourishing that, as a new pope, Clement XII., had ascended the Chair of Peter, Paul thought it high time to get something more than a bare verbal permission of a defunct Pontiff for his new mode of life. He wrote to Crescenzi, and Cardinal Corradini was communicated with. The answer from Crescenzi was favourable. A rich benefactor had promised to build them a retreat and church. Everything looked, as we should say, most promising.

Man proposes, God disposes. In a few days all these hopes were scattered to the winds. The novices took a strange turn. The parish priest and the cleric who came with them, put off the habit and went home ; the canon followed their example ; the lay brother

stayed a few days, and went off also. Thus ended the first noviciate. Only Br. Antonio remained, and we shall see what became of him afterwards. It were better he had accompanied the canon.

The *romito* crowed with exuberant shrillness over the depeopling of S. Antonio. The people talked in all sorts of ways. F. Paul was, of course, too hard, and nobody could stand him. Finally, the benefactor came and told them that he considered circumstances were so changed that he did not feel inclined to fulfil his promise. Poor Paul was desolate, but resigned, and he put off application for further sanctions until God should change the aspect of affairs.

CHAPTER XV.

MISSIONARY LIFE.

THERE are two sorts of missionaries in the Catholic Church which we may conveniently designate as *home* and *foreign*. The foreign missionaries carry the light of the Gospel to pagan or half-civilized countries, whilst the home missionary finds his zeal can be employed to its full extent in renewing the fervour of his more immediate neighbours, and extending through them the light of faith to those who are without the fold. The proper sphere of home missionary labour consists in reviving the spirit of Christianity rather than in conserving it. It must start and strike by means at variance with existent ones only in their combination. A mission must be a new thing ; but all its features must be familiar, or it would not take. A mission combines preaching startling sermons, plain instructions on the Christian's duties, and hearing confessions. Not one feature of this is new to the Catholic, but the time, place, and circumstances in which they are put together have all an appearance of newness.

It is in the nature of men that they require a periodical renewal of their devotional instincts, and this principle has always found its development in the old dispensation as well as in the new. The Jews

had their prophets who appeared at irregular intervals of their history, and enlivened their faith by a peculiar reading of the Law, or by shaking over their heads the rod of an angry God. Their priests and scribes continued their work in a beaten track, and had rather put difficulties in the way of proselytes than go out of their way to seek them. The Christian priesthood was always more zealous than the Jewish; it never flagged in its endeavours to spread the Gospel, for exclusiveness was never a mark of Catholicity. But the various departments of extending, conserving, and reviving the spirit of Christianity have been portioned out between especial vocations, in the priesthood itself, even from the beginning. S. Paul seems to have been always a missionary, S. James a stationary bishop, and S. Peter to have combined both functions in himself. The changes of country and ages do not alter the spirit of the Church—she is always the same, even in the mode of adaptation to new circumstances. Every age of the Church gives us a repetition of this threefold active power. S. Charles Borromeo, S. Francis Xavier, and S. Francis de Sales, do not more clearly exemplify it since the Council of Trent than other saints have done before it. The only change which history shows is that of systematizing what had been irregular or not well defined.

The home missionary work seems to have been brought to its present shape in the sixteenth century. Before that time, there were men who went from place to place to stir up the dormant devotion of the faithful; but they do not seem to have done so in regular bodies, staying for a given time in each place, and doing all

the work which missionaries of the present day accomplish.

Missionary life, as we now have it, is the most laborious life in the Church. For three or four weeks, the few religious who give a mission, have to preach every day, and sometimes twice in the same day, to spend from nine to twelve hours in a close confessional, to sleep but four or five hours out of the twenty-four, and to find at the end, and after having received the hearty assistance of the neighbouring clergy, that their work is but partially done. It is a never-ending labour, exhausting every faculty of mind and body, and its sole reward is the consolation of having done good here, and of being blessed for it hereafter.

The fruits of a mission are often counted by the crowds who attend it, the fervour it leaves behind it, and the perpetual good works which it starts; but only to the God of secrets are its real fruits properly known. How many a seared conscience is then made whole—how many an outcast from the Church is then restored to its bosom—how many a soul on the road to perdition is there put upon the way of salvation! These wonders shall be seen in their entirety only on the last day.

Every country has now its missionary orders, some indigenous to itself, and some derived from foreign countries; but it was from Rome that missions first started, and the states which bask in the sunshine of S. Peter's have always been most fruitful in missionary priests.

At the time S. Paul of the Cross began his labours in this field, there were no lack of fellow-workmen.

The great Jesuit missionary, Father Segneri, went to receive his reward on the very year in which Paul was born. He had visited nearly every part of the peninsula. Early in the eighteenth century S. Leonard of Port Maurice and his chosen band of mortified companions were pursuing an equally laborious and brilliant course. He was in the full flush of his missionary career when S. Paul in the north and S. Alphonsus in the south of Italy began another great campaign which not only met in the centre, but has since spread itself abroad from the rising to the setting of the sun.

It is S. Paul's personal share in this great work that we are now to trace. He brought only one new feature into the work, and that was the marked prominence which he gave to devotion to the Passion. This was the fulcrum by which he intended to have moved the world with the ordinary levers.

Although missions were in the design of the rules which he had written some six years before the date of our present narrative, he waited for undertaking them until the will of God should be made clear to him by the voice of his superiors. No mission is undertaken in the Church except it be called for by the Bishop or parish priest to whom the care of souls is properly entrusted. It is the old spirit of the Church again. All improvements must begin from herself, and be conducted under her eye.

This call was not long in coming. Mgr. Palmieri, the new Bishop of Soana, had just made the first visitation of his diocese, and he saw the necessity which existed in many places of a revival of piety. He

looked around him for the best means of arriving at this desirable end, and the solitaries of Monte Argentaro occurred to him at once. No better choice could have been made. Their very appearance was a sermon which could not be forgotten, and the sight of these holy men, completely dead to the world, opened the way for the burning words which long communing with God had taught them to utter. S. John Baptist preaching penance in the desert seemed to have let his garb of camel's hair and his earnest spirit descend upon the two brothers. They went forth to evangelize and they returned to do penance; they preached only what they practised, and that in a limited degree.

No one can receive sacred orders in the Church without what is called a title, *i.e.*, some reasonable assurance of a future provision for his livelihood. There are several titles, the title of benefice, of patrimony, of poverty. This latter title sounds rather odd, but it is the title upon which religious are ordained, because their profession in a religious order guarantees all that is required for future sustenance. Paul and John Baptist were not yet regular religious; because their rules were not specifically approved with all the canonical requirements. When they attended the hospital in Rome, they were ordained on a title arising from their engagements; but when they quitted the hospital, it was arranged that they should continue to say mass for a year, and that Cardinal Corradini was to provide them with benefices as soon as he could. This permission had to be renewed, as the Cardinal saw no opportunity of fulfilling his side of the con-

tract, and no disposition on the other side to hasten or exact its fulfilment. He communicated with Mgr. Palmieri, and on the 23rd February, 1731, a brief was expedited which gave the brothers the *titulum missionis*, and on the following July they were privileged to give the Papal blessing at the conclusion of their missions or retreats.

The theatre of their first mission was the village of Talamone, once a city of Etruria, then a seaport of the old republic of Sienna, and reduced to the condition of a poor village at the time of our Saint. It used to be almost depopulated in winter on account of a malaria which was caused by its surrounding marshes; but in summer, at which time Paul gave the mission, it was resorted to by many, something after the fashion of our watering-places. Among the visitors of the season of 1731 came one Agnes Grazi, a lady from Orbetello. She was of a noble and fashionable family, and, whilst keeping up an honourable reputation, she went beyond all bounds in the gaities, vanities, modes, and amusements of the place. She was, in fact, a belle of the first grade, and considered it a point of honour that she should sustain such a distinguished position. Among other fashionable things, she considered it particularly elegant to be conspicuous at the missionary sermons. One day she suffered from toothache, and gave way to all sorts of lamentations, for a slight suffering is very painful to one of such tender sensibilities. She would not miss the sermon, however, and was this night in her usual place. The sermon was on hell this evening, and after giving a dreadful picture of the torments of the damned, F. Paul

exclaimed : “ And you there, who can scarcely endure a toothache, how will it fare with you if you deserve a place in this sea of torments ? ” It seemed to her as if the missionary addressed her by name, and sent his words into the very depth of her soul ; she trembled from head to foot, wept profusely, and when the sermon was over, went and made a general confession, and then and there consecrated herself to God by a vow of perpetual chastity. Her life henceforward was the reverse of what it had been—the fashionable ladies who yielded her the palm for finery now saw her morning and evening before the tabernacle in a modest black dress, and the eyes which rambled about in search of objects of pleasure were fixed upon the ground. She continued to the end of her life to edify her neighbours, and her open example of repentance and change of life, so sudden and so unexpected, helped the mission to a great victory over souls led captive by the specious pretexts of serving God without renouncing the pomps of the world and the devil. We transcribe the rule of life which the Saint prescribed for this good soul :—

“ 1. On rising in the morning make an hour’s meditation, and after it a spiritual communion.

“ 2. Try to hear mass every day, and if any reasonable cause intervene to prevent this, bear it patiently.

“ 3. The rest of the time until dinner, work with your mind fixed on God in silence ; answer, however, when asked any question, and do so sweetly and kindly.

“ 4. Half an hour before dinner read a little, and if possible spend a quarter of an hour at the foot of the crucifix.

“ 5. Some small mortification at dinner.

“ 6. Moderate and cheerful recreation with your companions after dinner.

“ 7. Work then until about seven o'clock, then prepare for meditation, in which spend another hour.

“ 8. Supper, recreation, night prayers, rest. God bless you.”

The brothers were almost continually occupied in giving missions in the neighbouring villages for the space of two years after this date—1731. When they returned to their hermitage, it was not to rest; they went as usual, when not occupied at home, to visit the sick, to console the dying, and do everything in the way of charity which lay in their power. We have not full records of all those missions; but, from the specimens handed down to us, we may form some estimate of their success. Neighbouring Bishops gave them faculties for confessions in their dioceses, and the people were enthusiastic in laying their griefs open to the servants of God. In the year 1733 they gave their first mission in Orbetello—this was what we should call the post-town of the place, and thus are we told of its fruits. This mission began in February. The attendance was very great; for besides the inhabitants of the town there was a new garrison quartered there, and the soldiers and officers with their wives swelled the audience. The influence of soldiers upon a country town is proverbial. They bring dissipation, amours, and open, or at least badly disguised immorality with them. In Orbetello this barefaced lewdness had gone so far that ladies made it a point to appear in church in attire much more-

scanty than our fashionable full-dress. The Saint inveighed so strongly against this profanation that shoulders were moderately covered next night; he went a little further in his invectives, and the female portion of the audience were at length pretty modestly dressed. There was one Frenchwoman there who resented very much these restrictions upon the exhibition of female vanity, and determined to show her disapprobation of the whole business, at the same time resolving to defy the Saint and assert the right her sex lay claim to; namely, that of doing what they please, provided it be in the fashion. She planted herself just under the missionary's eyes, if possible, even more *fully* dressed than any of her companions had been. The Saint said not a word. He gave one severe, reproving look at her, and in a moment her face, hands, arms, and shoulders became as black as charcoal. All were horrified. She took out a handkerchief and tried to hide her deformity, but could not succeed—grace did its work, and at the conclusion of the sermon she was as demonstrative in the signs of her repentance as she had been at its beginning in those of her vanity and impudence. By the prayers of the Saint she recovered her former colour in a few days; but such was the effect of the incident, that about forty of the most respectable ladies in the town dressed henceforward almost in the garb of as many nuns.

In this town existed also the miseries of the London courts and alleys. Whole families were forced from extreme poverty to lie (father, mother, sons and daughters) huddled together in the barest skeleton of a single bed. The Saint took up their case, he preached and

begged, and before the end of the mission was enabled to provide decent lodgings for sixty poor families, who would otherwise have lost innocence and shame in their promiscuous herding together.

The knowledge of these remarkable events was spread very fast, and the people began to have recourse to the intercession of the hermits of S. Antonio for all their needs, spiritual and temporal. One day a man named Curzio Petri, came up the mount in tears, begging that the Saint would pray for his wife, who had been just given up by the doctors. Paul had compassion on him ; he called his brother, and both went to pray in the church. After a few minutes he went out and told the man that his wife would recover ; the poor fellow went away confiding, and he met a messenger who had just crossed from the mainland in a boat to tell him that his wife had taken a sudden turn for the better, and was pronounced out of danger before he started on his errand. With such manifestations of God's pleasure and approval did the first Passionists spread the good odour of Christ around them.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FIRST RETREAT.

THE number of the Saint's first companions had been reduced to two, as has been observed, and for more than a year had they gone on without the least sign of the vacant places being filled up. No one seemed inclined to venture on such an arduous course of life. They preferred looking at it in the distance to adopting it themselves. One day FF. Paul and John Baptist took a quiet walk through the declivities of the island, discoursing upon their occupations and their prospects. They thus wandered away insensibly to the distance of about a mile from their hermitage, and arrived at a point where the gently rising hill stretches into a green and open plain, from which they could enjoy a complete view of the city and lake of Orbetello with its surrounding picturesque scenery. Here they knelt down to adore the blessed sacrament in the principal church—as was their custom whenever they came in sight of a town—and they recited the litany of Our Lady with some other prayers. Paul was wrapped up in an ecstasy for some time, and his brother waited reverently by him. After a little time, Paul stood up, took his stick and traced a line up and down the plain until he enclosed a space which looked like the outlines of the ground-plan of a church and monastery. “Here,” he said, “we shall build the first church and retreat of our Order.”

Now came the practical way of setting about it. He wished in his own words to have "a large houseful of religious who would praise God day and night, and he felt certain he would, and this was the first step towards it. Our holy Father went then down to Orbetello, and spoke to his great benefactor Marco Antonio Grazi (the father of the lady of the toothache who became such a saint). This gentleman was a captain, and had a brother a very influential ecclesiastic in the town. Both felt deeply indebted to S. Paul for the wonders wrought through his means in the sanctification of their family, and determined to do all they could. There was a meeting of the leading people in the town convened, and they decided upon doing everything for the holy solitaries. They had some surplus in the communal funds which they might dispose of in charity, and this they intended to lay out in buying the plain upon which the lines were traced by Paul's stick. They had to go through a legion of formalities in order to effect this, as the land was supposed to be church property, incapable of sequestration or change except by the consent of the congregation of Bishops and Regulars in Rome. Cardinal Corradini was requested to negotiate the matter; but, for some cause or other, he answered as drily and stiffly as if it did not concern him which way things might go. He did not oppose the project, but he shuffled and put off and did everything short of it. It was supposed that the tongue of calumny was wagging in his Eminence's ear something not quite to the credit of the servants of God. Time was thus consumed and nothing done, until it entered the mind of one of the impatient

Orbetellians to go and examine the boundaries on the island. He found that the property did not belong to the Church at all, but to the King of Naples. They treated with his representative, and his consent was obtained without much difficulty. As soon as ever the committee (for we shall call them by this name) heard this, they were overjoyed; and, although it was mid-winter, a heap of bricks, stones, wood, shovels, pickaxes, trowels, mortar, etc., etc., were upon the plateau in a day's time.

Unexpected events put a sudden stop to the zeal of the good citizens in behalf of their beloved missionaries. A large fleet was being manned in Spain, and everybody suspected that it was with no amicable intentions regarding the imperial possessions in Italy. This suspicion was confirmed by a general calling up of the soldiers, and the putting all the fortified places in a posture of defence. Everything spoke of war and its dire consequences, and paralyzed the efforts of those who saw in every armed man an augury of foreboding misfortune. To add to this panic, an epidemic broke out in the beginning of summer which threatened to carry the majority of the inhabitants into the grave. Paul and John Baptist were just taking a little rest after a series of very successful and laborious missions when the epidemic showed its first fatal symptoms. They left their solitude at once, and lived night and day at the bedsides of the suffering poor. They were indefatigable. The more loathsome and uncomfortable the place, the surer were the brothers to be found there. Our holy Father was at length taken ill. He was attacked by a malignant fever, and stood for days

at death's door, without a single material hindrance to sheer death by exhaustion, but a little bread and water, seasoned by oil and salt. He languished from the effects of this attack until the month of November when he appeared again, quite cadaverous, upon the platform, and undertook his cycle of missions which he had interrupted in May. This happened in 1732.

The dread of an approaching war soon subsided, when it was found to be a false apprehension, and with the Saint's recovered health came three missions in Porto S. Stefano (the town founded by F. John Baptist's catechised fishermen), Piombino, and Orbetello. They were into the spring of 1733 now, and Paul be-thought him of the suspended work of the retreat. The Orbetellians had grown heedless in the matter after they had deposited their bricks and planks upon the mountain, and had come down to be frightened with an imaginary war and scourged by an epidemic. After the mission was concluded, and the people were roused into fervour once more, the Saint preached them a short charity sermon for his new retreat. We give a piece of it, and it may serve as a specimen of our holy Father's eloquence. After praising the good citizens for their attachment, and the proofs they gave of it two years before, he said: "But then, forgetting your good promises, you abandoned the work you had begun. The materials you brought up lie there scattered on the mount, a useless heap of rubbish trodden down by the feet of your herds. The wood is rotting, the foot of the steer is tossing aside the bricks and cracking the tiles, and the rocks which you placed

there serve as a nest for the adder and a covert for the fox. This change we must attribute to our unworthiness. We adore the judgments of God, and willingly resign ourselves to the designs of His providence. Seeing, therefore, that we are unworthy of your regard, we are resolved to go elsewhere and give another people the opportunity of meriting by doing us a work of mercy."

This appeal had its desired effect. When the Saint had done speaking he blessed the multitude, and he and F. John betook themselves to their solitude heedless of the expressions of the people's love and reverence. When they came to the city gates, they found there collected the mayor and the aldermen (we suppose), together with all the officers of the garrison and the magnates of the city. They gave public testimony of the gratitude of the people, begged the holy men to stay with those who prized their presence so much, and promised that they should set about the building without further delay than was necessary to make proper arrangements for carrying it on properly. The Saint gave in at once, and thanked them cordially for their good wishes. That same day they made a collection, and every one volunteered to contribute what they could. Some gave lime, some stones, some timber, some their labour. The Vicar General's permission was soon obtained, and on the 4th March, 1733, the first stone was solemnly laid. Our holy Founder was not present at the ceremony, as he was engaged giving a course of Lenten sermons in Piombino, a town about fifty miles north of Orbetello. This was the first and last regular Quaresimale which S. Paul ever gave. He

objected to them, both in practice and in his rule, on account of the abuses prevailing in the Italian pulpits at the time, whereby Lenten sermons came to be displays of sham erudition and profanity, instead of discourses befitting the Gospels of the penitential season. It was at this time, also, that he gave his first retreat to nuns, which turned one very tepid creature into a most fervent soul.

The Orbetellians were true to their promises; they wrought away at the building, and F. John Baptist gave then necessary orders. They found it very inconvenient to have to carry water a long distance up the hill, and this difficulty retarded them a good deal. F. John Baptist took a cross and followed by his companions came into the plain on which they were building; they prayed there for some time, and he ordered the workmen to dig, when they found a limpid spring, which afforded them plenty of water, and still continues to supply the retreat.

When the Saint returned from Piombino he found the walls a considerable height above the ground. Both brothers went together on the next series of missions, and when they returned they found the works were stopped by order of the royal officials. Count de Harrach succeeded Count Visconti in the vice-regal office, and his leave was necessary for the resumption of the building. Paul and John Baptist went all the way to Naples for this permission, and had, for some cause not known, to return without it. It remained in this incomplete state for well-nigh three years, and through many difficulties the Fathers were able to make it their residence only in 1737. We

must leave the building as it is now, and turn our attention to other events of our Saint's life.

When the brothers were giving a mission in Saturnia they found the place infested by banditti. This and other towns of Tuscany served as a *refugium peccatorum* for the outlaws of other states. Here they mustered in strong force and levied blackmail on the peaceful inhabitants. In fact, safety in life and limb had to be purchased from the lawless chiefs who headed those freebooters. In the town of Saturnia lived a famous brigand chief. He defied the laws of God and man, and lived in open concubinage. Paul burned for his conversion ; he prayed and waited for his attendance in church, but in vain ; sin had too strong a hold upon him to allow him to risk the chance of being persuaded to give it up. Seeing that he did not come to the church, Paul determined to go and seek him. He came to his house, and the bandit met him, armed to the teeth, at the door. "What do you want with me?" he said, in a rough, angry tone. Paul seized his crucifix, and raising it, said with authority, "I want you to send that woman away, and stop your public scandals once for all." The brigand, half cowed by the tone of the missionary, replied,—“But, F. Paul, what harm is it?” “Send her away, if you will not have me go to the Grand Duke about it,” said the servant of God. “When must I send her away?” the man said at last. “This instant,” replied Paul. “And will you hear my confession then, Father?” asked the poor fellow. “Yes, dear child,” said Paul, and his tone changed at once from sternness to sweetness ; “yes, I shall hear your confession and make you happy as

well." F. Paul then sent for the parish priest, and they sent the woman off to a penitentiary. The bandit was completely altered, and henceforward edified the people by a saintly life.

This conversion stirred up the fury and vengeance of all the robbers in the vicinity against F. Paul. He heard that they intended to waylay him and avenge the loss of their chief. He never heeded, but trusting in God's protection, himself and F. John Baptist set out for another mission as soon as this was over, and as it was to be in Manciano, they were obliged to pass through the very fastnesses which swarmed with banditti. They had scarcely left behind them the last sight of a habitation, when their ears were assailed by a tumultuous uproar of fierce growling and barking of dogs. They looked around, and beheld a gang of robbers with a number of huge mastiffs. The bandits surrounded the fathers; but as they approached, the expression of their countenances began to change, and when they were beside the holy men they were at a loss how to show sufficient reverence and respect. Paul spoke kindly to them, and said,—“I suppose these brutes would have no objection to biting us or eating us up if they were hungry?” “Do not fear, Father,” one of them said; “unless we slip them they won't do any harm; we keep them for warning and defence, two offices which are of great use to us.” They became great friends to the missionaries all at once, and, charmed by their conversation, could not tear themselves away from their company. They escorted them to Manciano, and left them at the entrance of the town, only to return in a few days and

cast themselves repentant at their feet. Paul heard them, made them change their mode of life, and obtained their pardon from the Grand Duke.

About this period, also, S. Paul made a pilgrimage to the Holy House at Loretto. This journey was, doubtless, a memorable one ; for it must have been a wonderful consolation to one of such deep spirituality as our Saint to kneel in the very house in which the Word was made flesh. It was signalized by two remarkable incidents. A priest's servant accompanied the Saint from Pitigliano to Perugia, in order to show him his way through those unbeaten paths. As they proceeded, a very heavy shower threatened. Paul knelt down and prayed a little while ; they then resumed their journey, and the servant was astonished to see the rain falling all around them, and not drop, upon them or their path. He looked stupified at Paul and fancied he was a magician ; he left him as soon as he could, and ran home, rejoicing that he had escaped being carried off to fairyland or some worse place. All his suspicions were confirmed by finding that the road they travelled was perfectly dry from Cetona to S. Cassiano, and that the surrounding country wore the tokens of a heavy fall of rain, He ran breathless to tell his master, but the good priest told him that he had had the honour of accompanying a Saint, and that the miracle he had witnessed was not at all the greatest which the Saint was said to have performed.

When the Saint came to Perugia minus his guide, he found that the parish priest there took him for a vagabond. His letter of introduction did not remove the impression, for the priest sent him to dine with

his servant-man, and would have made him sleep in the same company if his sister had not suggested that this would be disrespectful to the priest who recommended him. It was resolved, then, that the poor Saint should be locked up in a safe room, and that the plate should be put in a well-secured chest. Paul saw all this, and only said,—“ I hope you will let me go early in the morning, as I don't wish to lose time on my journey.” The priest made no reply, but locked Paul up himself, and took the key with him. He slept it out next morning, and forgot all about his prisoner. When he remembered it, he sent his sister to open the door, and said in reply to her gentle reproof,—“ You don't know what might have happened if I did not take every precaution.” When the door was opened, no Paul was to be found. He had disappeared, no one knew how, and he could not have gone through the window, as that was well secured with iron bars.

CHAPTER XVII.

HIS DEEDS IN TIME OF WAR.

PHILIP V., king of Spain, intending to place the crown of the two Sicilies upon the head of his third son, Don Carlos, who was already styled Duke of Parma and Piacenza, entered into a league with Louis XV., king of France, when about to wage war against Charles VI. concerning the succession of Poland. They soon gained a third ally in the person of Charles Emanuel III. of Sardinia, who was to receive the duchy of Milan as the reward of his assistance. In consequence of this federation, the French and Sardinian troops attacked together the Austrian forces in Lombardy in October, 1733. Whilst these were engaged in the interior, a Spanish armada disembarked in the Gulf of Spezzia, and marched into Tuscany; not that portion of territory belonging to Tuscany which is divided from the duchy by Parma and Modena, but Tuscany proper. As the commander made Sienna his headquarters, the inhabitants of Orbetello and the other garrisons on the coast feared every day that they should be bombarded. Their fears were for the present dissipated, for the Spaniards were content with a few raids, which did no more harm than that of driving away the cattle which grazed on the neighbouring plains. In the meantime Don Carlos, who was appointed generalissimo of the Spanish troops

in Italy, marched against Naples, and in less than a year he vanquished the Austrians, and having become master of the kingdom, was crowned king in Palermo, as Charles III.

His lieutenant, Count Visconti, now published an edict ordering all the subjects of the hostile powers to leave the newly-conquered dominions within a month. Paul and his companions, being Piedmontese, came of course within the terms of the edict, and it was not at all pleasing to them to leave their dear solitude, where they had laboured so long in their sanctification. The people would feel it more than the good Fathers; these were ready to go anywhere at the call of obedience, but those were not so perfectly indifferent. Even the Spanish troops had learnt to love the solitaries, and their departure from Monte Argentaro would spread a universal grief throughout the town which lay at its base. Besides, they were not disposed to pull a trigger, and plot a conspiracy against any government. They wanted souls for heaven, and against the prince of darkness alone would they wage war. These considerations moved the Spanish general to make an exception in their favour; and not only were they allowed to pursue their accustomed avocations among the people, but they might enter and leave the fortress whensoever they pleased.

They then went on with their missionary work, which extended through three or four of the surrounding dioceses. Little more can be said about missions than barely cataloguing them. One is just like another. There may be longer hours in the confessional, worse

accommodation, and less assistance in one place than another ; but, taking them on the average, they nearly all come to the same, as far as the missionaries are concerned. All that we think necessary, is to record anything which may have occurred out of the ordinary way, especially if it be characteristic of our modern Thaumaturgus.

As Paul was giving a mission in Scanzano, a town in the diocese of Soana, he found a poor collegiate canon a prisoner in his own house through fear of a relative, who threatened to take his life if he caught him out anywhere. He took a young cleric with him, and went to look for this dangerous man who, seeing the missionary, and suspecting at once the object of his visit, thought it safer to fly than enter a contest in which he feared he might be vanquished. He ran off, and the Saint ran after him, calling out to him to stop. But the man seemed deaf to all entreaties, and was swifter of foot than the Saint, who made one appeal to him before he could be altogether out of hearing. He took up his crucifix, and said, in a loud tone,—“ If you do not obey the voice of Christ, who calls upon you through me to be reconciled to your relative, you will fall dead into the first ditch you try to cross.” The unfortunate man was frightened, still he kept as far as he could from his pursuer, until he came to a ditch. Here the words of Paul began to take effect ; he stopped and reflected awhile, and the end of his reflections was that he turned back in chase of the servant of God, who had given up when he saw that his pursuit was about to be naturally fruitless. When the man came up to him, he found him on his

knees. He immediately resigned himself like softened wax into the father's hands, and was reconciled to his friend the canon and to God.

Another very strange thing occurred in Magliano (a village somewhere in the neighbourhood of Orbetello). There was a gentleman there named Francesco Vivarelli, who had borrowed a hundred scudi from a priest and gave a bond or bill for it. He paid it at the appointed time, but either forgot to get a receipt, or the priest was not then ready to write him one. He promised, however, to send him the receipt and return the bond. In a few days he passed to his account, and the heirs, who found the bond among his papers, but not the receipt, came down upon poor Vivarelli for the amount. He, unable, and unwilling also, to pay the same debt over again, protested in all manner of ways that he had paid already. It was no use; they summoned him to court, and as the Saint came to the place for a mission at the juncture, he told him all about it, and asked him to interpose his good services in his behalf. Paul said that he should think about it, and told him to wait until he had said Mass. Vivarelli followed him to his lodgings, and Paul told him to call the heirs. They showed the bond, and both sides began to argue as warmly as if it were possible to come to a conclusion. In the heat of the dispute, Paul pulled a document out of his sleeve, and said,—“My sons, look if this receipt is your uncle's; examine it well, and see if it be his handwriting.” “Yes,” they answered, after a careful examination; “yes, that is certainly his handwriting, and if we had seen it before, we should not have done as we have,”

They immediately tore the bond, and Paul folded up the receipt and put it back in his sleeve. No one ever saw it again.

Whilst our missionaries were busy in their vocation, the Spanish forces were marching northwards, with the intention of attaching to the new kingdom the little state called *Lo Stato dei Prssidii*, in which Monte Argentaro and some of the towns thereabouts were situate. The Duke of Montmar, with 25,000 men, marched into Tuscany in the month of February, 1735. The Austrian general, finding himself unable to cope with so formidable an enemy, retired into the fortresses and prepared for siege. Great was the consternation of the people of the surrounding districts when the Fathers returned to their solitude in the middle of March. They went up and down to encourage the desponding people, and exhort them to bear all the terrors of the crisis with patience.

Paul had occasion to go to Castel S. Fiora on a mission of charity. He had to pass through the Spanish soldiery, which he did fearlessly, and arrived safe at his journey's end. On his return, however, he fell in with a flying column, who took him for a spy, on account of his unusual garb, which they thought was assumed in order to evade detection. They took him prisoner and brought him before their general, who was the Marquis de las Minas. This general was as pious and prudent as he was brave, and from the answers and deportment of the prisoner he saw at once that he was a holy priest, and became his intimate friend. He even invited him to dine with him that day, and dismissed him with every mark of esteem and

respect. He passed through the camp, of course with a profusion of salutes from the soldiery, as if they ought to make up for their rash judgments by a fuller atonement.

In April, the standards of the enemy were seen approaching the mountain, and the alarm was given all through the *Presidii*. Orbetello was blockaded, and the conduct of the campaign was committed to Las Minas, who was ordered by Montmar to take the heights of Monte Argentaro as a vantage-ground for an assault on the fortress of Monte Filippo. This order was literally carried out, and the camp of Las Minas was pitched at a very short distance from the hermitage of S. Antonio. The general was glad to find himself so near his friend F. Paul, and he selected him as his director and confessor. The holy man was often invited to dinner by the general, and Paul, who did not wish to offend him, and thought his good graces could be turned to advantage, frequently accepted his invitations. The Saint edified the officers very much by the way he managed to mortify himself at table, and the ingenious and pleasant way in which he defended himself when they hospitably called him to task for it.

On the 16th April the fortress was attacked, and at the first noise of the artillery, Paul was to be found amid the killed and wounded, helping the latter to make a happy death. He used to hear the confessions at night of soldiers who were going into an engagement next morning. Sometimes he was in such imminent danger, that he was covered with the earth which was dug up by the cannon-balls, and once a soldier

was shot at his side. The general saw the holy priest exposing himself to danger, and he sent a soldier to bear him company and tell him when to stoop his head and let a ball pass over it. From the camp before Monte Filippo he would go to the blockade of Orbetello, and he was the more anxious to do work here because the soldiers were attacked with a malaria and were dying of a malignant fever. His experience in the hospital made him an adept in the art of nursing and prescribing ordinary remedies. By his exertions he gained the hearts of all, and was, as he confessed himself, almost the commander of the soldiers. Crowds of the poor fellows were around his confessional every night. He used to interpose his influence in asking for the pardon of soldiers condemned to death through serious breaches of discipline, and seldom failed in obtaining it. What was still more wonderful, he had just the same influence in the enemy's camp. He went backwards and forwards—no one suspected him—he heeded simply his spiritual duties, and the gunners used to be still when they saw him coming until he had passed out of the range of their fire.

The attack on Monte Filippo lasted twenty-nine days. At the end of that time, a shell, which was lodged in their powder magazine, blew it up. The fort immediately surrendered to the Spaniards of Portercole. Orbetello alone was wanting to make their victory complete. Las Minas seeing the obstinacy of the handful which held the garrison, and hearing by report that the citizens were in favour of the Austrians and averse to Spanish domination, gave orders to

lay waste their cornfields and vineyards, and to bombard the city. The orders were about to be carried out; already were the mounds thrown up and the batteries prepared, when Paul went to the general and tried to mollify him; he begged him to spare the poor people, and eloquently set forth their noble qualities. He said, besides, that a surrender was not far off, and that he should find that if he only had a little patience, it would be abundantly rewarded by the fidelity of the people to their new sovereign. The general was at first unmoved, but finally overcome by the pleadings of the Saint, he said,—“For your sake alone, Father Paul, I do,” and he revoked the orders. The garrison capitulated in less than a month, and when the general entered the place with his troops, he was so pleased with his reception, that as soon as he met the Saint afterwards, he said,—“You were right, Father Paul; I am much pleased with the Orbetellians, and am much obliged to you for the course you made me take.”

We shall conclude this chapter by narrating the few incidents which mark the conclusion of the year 1735.

Shortly after the surrender of Monte Filippo, Paul had to suspend his labours in the camp in order to go with his brother to the Isle of Elba, and then to Capraia to preach Jesus Crucified to the people of these territories. The Bishop of Massa and Populonia announced the arrival of the missionaries by a circular to his clergy, in which he set forth the great grace God had conferred upon them by sending such a saint among them, and exhorted them to second

his endeavours, make a retreat themselves under his direction, and then send him a full account of the great things which were sure to be accomplished. These orders were faithfully attended to, and the Saint and his brother laboured for three months without ceasing in this new field of their apostolate.

When he was occupied with a mission in a place called Rio, a poor woman came to him who was cruelly maltreated by her husband on account of the calumnies of a wicked creature, who impeached her chastity. Paul sent for the foul-mouthed accuser, and talked her into a promise to retract what she had said; he then sent for the husband, and when he was come into the slanderer's presence, Paul said,—“ Now is the time to unsay what you falsely accused this good man's wife of. Was it not all false? ” She fell away at once and replied,—“ No, no; it was perfectly true, every word.” Paul then said,—“ Very well, if you maintain this, come with me into the church and repeat it before the Blessed Sacrament.” They all went into the church, and another priest came up to see what was the matter. In the presence of all, and thus solemnly before her God, she swore that her calumnies were all true. Scarcely were the perjured words out of her mouth, when she was seized by an invisible power, and carried through the air out of the church; her tongue became as black as ink, protruding from her mouth, and her whole face became livid and horrible. Paul exorcised the evil spirit, and after some time he let the wretch fall half stunned upon the pavement. The Saint then took the ciborium from the tabernacle and blessed her with it; she recovered, and with

great sorrow confessed her sins and unsaid all her calumnies.

The Isle of Elba was visited with so severe a drought during his sojourn there, that the inhabitants considered the corn, poor and parched as it was, not worth cutting. "Reap it," said the servant of God; "trust in God, and you will see how good He is." They did so, and, by a prodigy of heaven, so abundant was the harvest, that it was commemorated in the island ever after as F. Paul's harvest.

When this course of missions was over, the brothers returned to Monte Argentaro, not to rest, but to go out again for full two months more on other missions. When they returned after this, they rested a few days, and thus gave missions to the Spanish troops of Orbetello and Portercole. General de las Minas set a bright example to all his soldiers during those missions, and indeed during his stay in the neighbourhood. He was always present at the Saint's sermons, put himself completely under his direction, obeyed him like a child, spent two hours in spiritual exercises every morning before he began his audiences, frequented the Sacraments very often, and was a model Christian in every manner.

About this time occurred one of those incidents which show us more clearly than volumes of speaking and writing, how ardent was Paul's zeal for the conversion of sinners. One evening a wood-ranger, or, as some say, a bandit, arrived at S. Antonio, fully armed and not bent upon much good. Our holy father entered into conversation with him, and found that he had not been to confession for thirty years. He tried

every means of converting him without success ; and at last asked him if he had any objection to lodge in the hermitage for that night. It was winter, and the man was very glad to accept the offer. He got up early in the morning, took his arms, which were like a part of his ordinary dress, and betook himself to his home. When he had proceeded down the mountain as far as a pond which was frozen over, what was his surprise at seeing the Saint immersed in the water with his hands extended in the form of a cross. "What are you doing there, Father Paul?" he exclaimed. "I am here," said the Saint, in a sad and sorrowful tone, "doing penance for you." This had its desired effect. The man went back to the hermitage, made his confession, and stayed there doing penance for eight days.

The year closed with some bright favours for the holy man. His third brother, Father Anthony, was ordained priest. A fervent young priest, Father Fulgentius of Jesus, joined the institute. He intended joining when quite a young cleric, but, by Paul's advice, he put it off until his ordination. He often visited the father in the meantime, and spent several days with them in S. Antonio.

A little incident occurred the day F. Fulgentius arrived, which is very telling. All the good religious were rejoiced, and F. Paul suggested that they should have a feast on the head of it. They kindled a fire and put on a pot full of beans. Whilst they were boiling, they began to speak of heaven and the glory of the blessed. They became enraptured with S. Paul's conversation, and it was only next morning they dis-

covered how much they were absorbed in listening to him, when they found the beans not only boiled, but roasted into the bargain, at the bottom of the pot. After Father Fulgentius there came others; so that at the end of this year the little community numbered nine—five priests and four lay-brothers; they built an additional shed to accommodate four of them, and in holy poverty, and austerity and prayer, they all led the life of angels.

CHAPTER XVIII.

*TRIALS, AND THE COMPLETION OF THE
RETREAT.*

DURING the war the building of the new retreat did not advance much. A lay brother mason kept putting a stone here and there, in order to keep the walls from decay, and the holy founder was often his attendant. As soon as peace was restored, the Saint was resolved to go on with the work. He was seen by a clerical friend of his one day carrying a hod full of mortar to the lay brother, and was asked how did he intend to prosecute the undertaking. "Well," said the Saint, "I have just three paoli (about 1s. 3d.), and if God assist me, as I hope He will, we shall go on." The General de las Minas had removed all the difficulties with regard to the civil authorities, and nothing seemed to be wanting but funds for paying the workmen. They had spent all they received, and the citizens of Orbetello were drained by the late war, and what resources were at their disposal had to go towards supplying the new wants which were created by the changes. By the advice of the general, Paul determined to go to Naples and beg of Don Carlos. He and John Baptist set out upon this mission in the winter of 1736. The season was so severe that we are told even Italian rivers were frozen, a very rare occurrence. They were brought into the royal presence, on the strength, no doubt, of

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the general's letters, and after a short audience they were dismissed with a present of three hundred scudi.

They returned to Monte Argentaro in great spirits, and all the brethren worked at the building. It was a touching sight to see the venerable form of the Saint bending under loads of stone, timber, mortar, etc., and preaching by his words and example to the tradesmen. The powers of hell seemed to be let loose against the good work, for by invisible hands was pulled down every night what had been built in the day. Paul's prayers set all right in a short time, and he had to repel an attack of the evil one upon his own person immediately after. His patience, like that of Job, was invincible, and it was much easier to vanquish infernal foes than their agents in flesh and blood, as we shall soon see.

The body of the Spanish forces in Italy were drafted off to Pisa and Leghorn, where they joined the army of the commander-in-chief, the Duke of Montmar. His Grace, having heard of the missionaries from the troops and from Las Minas, sent a royal yacht for them, and asked them to come and do for the garrisons of these two towns what they had done for those of Orbetello and Portercole. The yacht was just about to enter the port of Leghorn, when a fierce north wind arose and drove her back to sea again. It grew into a tempest; vessels were sinking on every side of that which held the missionaries, and no better fate seemed in store for her. She sprang a leak—the water was filling her poop—the mariners furled the sail and took up the oars—one of the oars broke, and the boat became quite unmanageable, and had to be left to the

mercy of the wind and waves. The pallor of death was on every countenance. Paul then sang the Litany of Loretto, and invoked the aid of the Star of the Sea, inspired confidence in the sailors, and after one more effort they were all safely landed, to the no small surprise of the crowd who had assembled to watch the struggle, and had already given the crew up for lost. This journey was only fruitful in procuring the missionaries some very substantial aid for their new building ; the mission which was to take place in the last weeks of Lent having been prevented by an order from Madrid, which removed the soldiers to Barcelona.

The retreat was rising fast under the direction of F. Fulgentius, whilst the holy founder and his brother were occupied in giving missions in the diocese of Chiusi.

On their return they found everything encompassed by crosses and trials, which lasted for a whole year. We cannot better describe their effect upon the Saint than in his own words :—" Tempests arise on every side, and many contrary winds make us their sport. The devils persecute us with mortal hate ; men do so with good intentions. God be praised." Again :—" New battles are being prepared for me ; who knows with what result ? Storms swell more every day, darkness of mind increases, apprehensions do not disappear ; we are scourged by the machinations of devils and the tongues of men. Outside us all is conflict and din of contention ; inside, we have fears, darkness, clouded minds, tedium, and desolation."

All these troubles arose from very slight causes, but the spark once set, the conflagration grew apace. It

all began by a piece of foolish jealousy. The people of Portercole thought Paul had shown a preference for their neighbours of Orbetello, by building on the territory of the latter. These maintained, of course, that such was the case, and that it argued very good taste and judgment in the Saint to prefer such respectable people as they were to Portercolians. Small words led to big ones, and things went so far that the Saint and his companions were openly insulted and mocked. Now was the time for the *romito* to step in. He thought of setting up for a saint, and dreamt of founding an order himself, and the first step he thought was to build an opposition retreat on the other side of the hill from that of S. Paul. Some of the leading men in Portercole gave him their sympathy and assistance; and there was actually as much of the walls built as would suffice to make a monumental ruin to their foolishness and spite. Orbetello was, of course, on the side of Paul and his companions.

A change was wrought upon these people also. Several of the genteels of this town, who thought their position gave them a charter for the violation of the law of God in some points which custom favoured, were offended at the apostolic liberty of Paul, who reproved them publicly. The example and authority of Las Minas confined their displeasure to private murmurings and cabals; but, as soon as he left the place, there came upon them the spirit of evil-speaking in no stinted measure. They spoke and wrote against the missionaries all manner of unfounded things. The ecclesiastical superior of the territory on which the

new retreat was being erected was Cardinal Altieri, who held this cure as Abbot *in Commendam*. The grumbling portion of the town wrote to his Eminence a long memorial, setting forth that F. Paul had violated the canons in the irregular manner of his undertaking—that he encroached upon parochial rights—that everything which came into their heads as a plausible plea against him was done by him. The Cardinal hesitated, of course, until he heard the other side of the story; and a letter, thanking them for their zeal, or some polite acknowledgment of the sort, made them believe they had gained their point. They then gave out that Altieri had threatened with his mighty displeasure any one who should dare to be guilty of giving alms to the poor missionaries. Fear and human respect, backed up by evil reports, did their work. Devotion fell off, charity waxed cold, and the town which the Spanish troops had pronounced the most pious and virtuous they had ever known, came, in a short time, to a low level. Alms ceased to flow in, the funds for the building were laid out, and to such straits was the poor community of Paul reduced, that they had to live upon wild herbs and water.

The devils seemed to be let loose altogether, such was the extent of the torments which they inflicted in various ways upon the servants of God. Paul writes to a friend :—" Poor Paul, in what waters of tribulation art thou immersed! Ah! but the chastening scourge of God is laid upon us in an inexplicable manner, and I fear that things will be still worse! God be praised." In their greatest troubles heretofore they had some motives for consolation in their apostolic works. Now,

even this source was closed up. FF. Paul and John Baptist went to give a mission in Pitigliano, where they had given missions before, and were so well known ; but evil reports had whispered their way into the town, and the people would not come to hear them. They left the place and shook the dust off their feet at the gates, according to the Gospel precept. This ceremony always produces dreadful effects. Scarcely had the missionaries gone, when an epidemic broke out, which carried off five hundred of the inhabitants. That the cause of this might be clearly known, the scourge fell heaviest upon those who had distinguished themselves by opposing the mission, and not a single Jew died, though there were a great many of them in the town.

This was not all ; every member of the little community fell ill, and they had nothing whatever to help themselves to recover. Paul crawled out of bed and went around, encouraging the others to bear all patiently, saying that the darkest hour of the night was that which came before the dawn, providing what he could for them.

At this critical moment relief was at hand. A priest from the isle of Elba, named Don Pietro Cavalieri, came to join the community. He must have had a strong vocation. There lay the whole new Order before him, eight poorly-clad men, burning in fever, stretched upon a few handfuls of straw ; they had only a shed for a monastery, and a little room for a church ; they were without friends, without food, without prospects, without even the chance of consolation. This good priest was far from disheartened. He laid the little sum of money which he brought with

him out on restoratives, and he nursed all the suffering brethren until they recovered. He then went home, settled his domestic affairs, and returned to become one of their number. A pious lady heard of their distress, and sent them a large supply of provisions; and the nuns of Piombino, to whom Paul had given a retreat, were the next good Samaritans, for they made a collection for them amongst their opulent friends.

The sight of so much suffering did not soften the hearts of their enemies. They wanted to starve them out of the place; and seeing that this failed, they resolved to come in a body with pickaxes and crow-bars and demolish the walls of the new edifice. One night, just as the Saint and his companions had retired to rest, a mob came from the town to carry out this nefarious design. They had just gotten upon their ladders, when they saw a figure with a flaming sword guarding the building. They all took to flight, left their implements behind them, and scarcely drew breath until they found themselves at the foot of the hill. In remembrance of this and some revelations, S. Michael has been ever honoured in our Order as a special patron; and there was a chapel dedicated to him in the church, which was built on Monte Argentaro.

The Saint seems to have borne all those trials in perfect silence, and to have waited until God would show him some way of getting over them which might accord with His will. By the advice of his friends, he moved in the business at length, and had to make two journeys to Rome and write a multitude of letters before Cardinal Altieri saw how matters really stood.

At length the mists were cleared away, explanations were satisfactory, the house and church were completed, and nothing was wanting but the proper sanction for consecrating them to their destined purposes. The Cardinal had misgivings about the church. He feared that the solitude of the place not needing such an edifice, it would only go on a year or two as a sanctuary, and then be profaned. Perhaps even some of the dirt flung at the missionaries' good name still stuck, notwithstanding the efforts to clear it away. However this may be, the Cardinal gave permission for only a private oratory, and therefore they could not administer the Sacraments in it. This was a great trial to the good Fathers. Nothing did they thirst for so much as the salvation of souls; and now, when they were just in the way of doing something more in that way than they had yet done, the very man to whom the souls were entrusted forbade their interference. It was not the hardest part of their cross, but it was an unnecessary aggravation of the pain which they were already enduring.

He gave them permission, however, to live in the new Retreat, and in the summer of 1737 our first brethren took possession of the first Retreat of our Order. This was a great boon, when we recollect the way in which they were lodged in the old hermitage. A life such as they led is hard enough, without having its hardships aggravated by every species of privation. In the Retreat of the Presentation—so it was called—their life took a regular monastic shape, and that was a great matter. It is only those who have lived in old secular houses which have been knocked about

and put into a sort of shape for religious, that can understand the immense difference between them and houses built for the purpose. In the one case everything is askew. The refectory is where the chapel ought to be, and the kitchen might do perhaps for a sacristy. The choir is out of proportion, and the cells are irregular both in shape and position. There must be always some half-a-dozen things which look as if they had lost their vocation ; and that is only natural, since a house built for one purpose can never be fit for another so different from it as a religious life is from the purely secular. There is an ease and a harmony about a properly-built monastery—the very air of the place makes one feel he is not in the world, and its arrangement seems as if it were intended to reproach one for breach of discipline by its very regularity. The effect of building upon the mind has always been recognized by founders of religious Orders ; for they are particularly minute about prescribing every detail of their houses. S. Paul has a chapter in his rules regarding the form and size of houses of the congregation, in which the principal points insisted upon are plainness and convenience.

But the satisfaction of finding themselves in a house where they had room to breathe, if nothing else, was counterbalanced by the troubles consequent on the restrictions with regard to the new church. The poor Fathers were obliged to walk a mile and a half every morning to say mass in the old hermitage, whilst there was a pretty church next door to them perfectly useless. It was very hard, indeed ; but the hardship which Paul felt most may be seen from a letter which he wrote

on the subject to Cardinal Altieri :—" We are hereby deprived of the convenience of saying our prayers before our Lord in His tabernacle ; we cannot as heretofore administer the sacraments to the poor things who come to us hungry and needy for their reception. We trust only in Divine Providence, since trust in man has often proved so deceptive."

This is extracted from a letter which he wrote to obtain permission, at least, to say mass in the new church. It had not arrived in Rome before Clement XII. had expedited a brief, on the 31st August, empowering the very Cardinal who had hitherto refused such a permission, to bless the church as a public oratory, in which, without prejudice to parochial rights, all the sacraments might be administered and every ecclesiastical function performed. This piece of good news was due to the interposition of Monsignor Crescenzi and Cardinal Corradini, Paul's old and constant friends at the Roman Court. When the Cardinal Abbot read this rescript, he was delighted that the settlement of the matter had been taken out of his hands, and sent it off at once with orders to his Vicar-General to bless the new church.

The feelings of the people began to take a change for the better ; the new commander of the town, a General Blom, was a fervent Catholic, and he took the part of the persecuted Fathers from the very beginning. His example was soon followed by others, and popular feeling grew to such a height now on the other side that it could be with difficulty restrained from untimely demonstrations.

All these good auspices culminated in the event of

the 14th September 1737—feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. Numerous boats were seen in the bay that morning, conveying the gaily-attired inhabitants to the Retreat; crowds wended their way up the sloping hills, and in a short time the area about the church was crowded with expectant people, on all of whose countenances beamed that peculiar sort of gladness which is compounded of the spirit of atonement for past injuries and of heartfelt joy at the opportunity offered of showing how the feelings are changed. Long and gorgeous rows of civic authorities in their robes of office come next, and after them are seen the officers in their gayest uniforms, with the band playing in their van, and cheering and enlivening the whole place by their martial rendering of sacred music. The Vicar-General, with the most notable of the clergy of the diocese, come now, and as they approach the church, clothed in their sacred vestments, a new sight strikes the beholders. Nine poor men, in the austere garb of the Passion, issue from the Retreat. First comes the Saint, with a rope around his neck; then F. John Baptist, F. Anthony, F. Fulgentius Pastorelli, and F. Pietro Cavalieri, followed by four lay brothers whose names have not reached us. They all came on, and fell into their appointed place in the procession. The church was solemnly blessed, High Mass was sung, and the founder preached. The ceremony then concluded, and there was at length a season of tranquillity and freedom from harassing annoyances in the Retreat of the Presentation.

This happy event was followed up by two others; one which granted them the ecclesiastical possession of

the place, and freedom from any parochial conditions; the other from the king, granting them a piece of land, and the use of the wood for firing, with a grove of chestnuts, which are a valuable property in Italy.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RULES UNDER CONSIDERATION.

THE Rules of religious Orders form a very important branch of Church discipline. They develop a peculiar phase of Christian life, originate new ideas, and couple together many old customs under new forms. The genius of rules in general is better understood from the ordinary way of looking at them than from any dissertations which could surround them with hoary sanctions or saintly effects. People ordinarily judge rules from their mildness, austerity, active or contemplative nature. It is difficult to disjoin these four aspects, since they are so often blended together that in reality rules are distinguished from each other more by the preponderance of any one of these features than from the absence of any.

In the early days of the Church, rules were very austere. The old monastic rules prescribed perpetual abstinence from flesh-meat, long prayers, coarse food to be taken once a day, and various other corporal inflictions. They laboured more at the subjugation of the body and its passions than at the elevation of the soul. In fact, they took for granted that the soul could be elevated to God only through corporal austerities. This spirit was in keeping with the instincts of the Church at the time. The canonical penances would frighten modern sinners, and yet we know that

these penances were in force for centuries in the early Church. Two natural causes gave a ground for such macerations. Constitutions grow delicate as ages pass by. A strong, healthy man of modern times would soon be on the doctor's list if he practised those severities which seemed to prolong the lives of the ancient anachorets. From whatever cause this change in the human constitution may proceed, it is an acknowledged fact that the case stands as has been noticed. Men were better able to endure hardships in the early centuries of Christianity than they are now. Whether it was their rough training, their exposure to heat and cold from their youth upwards, which gave them this power of endurance, or the strong build of their frames, it is needless to examine. They were better able to endure privations because they did endure them without dying under them. Again, in warm climates, men do not require as much food to support nature as they do in temperate or cold climates. The Eastern Dervishes can go a number of successive days without a morsel of food, whereas if a man is many days without food in our climate he will be found dead on a doorstep, perhaps, at the end of that time. Christianity was started in a warm climate, and, therefore, its requirements in point of fasting were very rigorous at first. Another fact deserves attention in this matter. In warm climates man is unfitted for great activity, whilst his power of passive endurance is very great ; in northern countries, on the other hand, man is hardier and more active, whilst he is seldom passive except against his grain.

The gradual intercommunication of North and South,

and more particularly the Crusades, which brought East and West together, originated a blending and harmonizing of these different capabilities under the benign superintendence of the Church ; and this gave rise, as has been well shown by Balmez, to modern civilization. With this, and what is usually termed the revival of learning, came a more refined spirit of introspection and disciplining of the will. Perhaps it would be more correct to say—we put it forth, however, as a conjecture—that with this revival came, especially in the Medicean age, a spirit of insubordination, or what is now called freedom of opinion, which, if too much indulged in, must be always fatal to religious simple obedience. However it may be accounted for, it is certain that since the beginning of the fifteenth century, the rules of religious life—from those of S. Ignatius to the latest congregation of nuns—place more stress upon submission of the will than upon macerations of the body. This epoch may be fixed upon as the commencement of mild Orders in the Church. S. Bernard's reform of Citeaux is the last of the hard rules, if we except the Abbé de Rance's reform in the last century in La Trappe.

The Church has accommodated her discipline to the needs of the times. Since the Council of Trent, no very severe Order has been approved of, and this may also account for the fact that most of the Orders before that time have become more or less relaxed and reformed ; whilst none of those established since have yet gone so far down in discipline as to need reformation. Moderate relaxation, or what is called a modification of some of the old Orders, was certainly called

for on account of the changes of times and place ; but, unfortunately, these modifications have been often taken before they were granted, and thus rendered necessary a reformation which has often split up the same religious family into many different branches.

The active and contemplative rules follow closely on the system of the mild and austere. The active is more suited to northern minds and the contemplative to southern. The active implying a wear and tear upon bodily strength, requires a more substantial nourishment, whilst the contemplative is advanced by weakening the body in order to strengthen the soul. An active life is corporal mortification in itself ; a contemplative life will generate sluggishness if not spurred into feeling by austerity. That a contemplative life is the more perfect, no one can doubt, after the decision of our Lord, as interpreted by the practice and teaching of the Church. That it is difficult to persuade people of this is just as natural as that it is difficult to persuade them of the impossibility of serving God and Mammon.

The rules which S. Paul wrote for his new Order were rather singular. They make about as complete a union of the four features we have adverted to as possibly can be. There is the monasticism of choir work and meditation, the active system of preaching and giving missions, united to the greatest amount of corporal austerity in any active Order, and at the same time an elasticity in the rule which provides against the encroachment of any definite mortifications upon higher and more important functions. The first copy of the rules gave an undue preponderance to

corporal austerity. The feet bare altogether, and head too, the short hours of rest and long ones of prayer; the scant food (it was fasting every day in the first copy), and the inferior quality of the nutriment allowed, were leading characteristics of this document.

All these points were modified in the passage of the rules through the Roman congregations. Sandals and a cap were prescribed, the hours of rest before matins were prolonged from four to five, the fast was brought down to three days in the week, and, by a supplemental modification, flesh meat was allowed four times a week, except in Lent and Advent. These were all the changes made in the volume written by young Paul Danei in the grotto of the Church of Castellazzo. These might be considered fatal as amendments to a bill of Parliament, since they touched the original on such important points; but rules are a very different thing from a measure of policy. They do not differ, it is true, in as far as they are legislative, and bound to take in various constitutions and dispositions; but they do differ, and widely, inasmuch as they are made from the beginning with a proviso that they be approved or changed as seemeth good to the judge to whom they are submitted. Paul had seven years' experience of their effect upon others, and thirteen years' of their effect upon himself and his brother. He saw health breaking down, and vocations frustrated. He saw the inconveniences which arose from all the works proper to their practice, and could form a very prudent judgment on their capability to carry out the objects for which they were written.

He was now in a position to finish the work for

which he knew he was destined. He had a house and church built according to his own ideas, and he was surrounded by fervent companions, who were admirably adapted for all the purposes of his new Order. The time was come when the permission once granted him by the Pope for the assembling of companions should take a more positive shape. A permission falls far short of an approbation. A permission may be given for a lesser evil or an indifferent affair enough ; but a thing must be proof-worthy and excellent to get the approbation of the Vicar of Christ.

In the beginning of the year 1738, Paul went once more to Rome, accompanied, very likely, by his faithful brother ; and, through the mediation of Cardinal Crescenzi, he was allowed to present a copy of his rules to Clement XII., and beg for his Holiness's approbation. The Pope received him very kindly, and said that he would submit the rules to a congregation of cardinals for examination. The congregation was soon formed, and began their sittings. They soon raised a multitude of difficulties. The rules were too severe ; they would just serve for a few very fervent and privileged souls, but could never answer for the rank-and-file of an ordinary religious order. The spirit of the Church was to make the rules meet ordinary cases and leave a margin wide enough to extend to extraordinary ones. Point by point they sent their objections to the Saint, and he gave in partly to some of them.

He saw, however, that the examination was likely to be tedious, and learnt—perhaps not for the first time—that Rome is very slow in her proceedings. Cardinal Crescenzi had asked him and F. John Baptist

to give a course of missions in the city of Pieve and the principal towns of his diocese, and had obtained for them besides many spiritual privileges from the Pope, among the rest the title of missionaries apostolic, with very large faculties, and indulgences plenary and partial, for their hearers. Paul, considering that time might likely be wasted about the Roman antechambers, which could be more profitably spent, left instructions with Crescenzi about the possible objections, and returned to Monte Argentaro. Here he waited some time, anxiously expecting the verdict of the examiners. but he received a letter, after a great deal of patience had been expended, to say that new difficulties of a grave nature had arisen, and that he must be there in person in order to settle them.

Again he set out for Rome, and this time F. Fulgentius was his companion. Monte Argentaro is about seventy-two English miles from Rome, and all that weary way Paul made several journeys on foot during his life ; so many that he shed tears in his old age when he remembered how familiar he was with every object on the road he had travelled so often, and so seldom with a light heart. He had now to travel in the month of February, and his footprints were marked with blood throughout the greater part of his journey. To Father Fulgentius it must have been more trying than it was to his companions. S. Paul had walked bare-foot through many parts of Italy for eighteen years, and his feet must have been well tempered by this time ; but poor Father Fulgentius had only put off his buckled shoes and silk stockings three years before, and he had not yet made any longer journeys than as

far as the towns in the neighbourhood of Monte Argentaro. They were subject to privations and insults, badly defended against the piercing cold ; and we may form some idea of their sufferings from the fact that the 25th of January—feast of the Conversion of S. Paul—is a feast in our Order, so constituted by our Holy Founder in thanksgiving for having escaped on that day being frozen to death three several times in his life. This journey was as fruitless as the one before it. The cardinals were unfavourable, and notwithstanding the pleadings of Crescenzi, he could gain nothing. Weary and disappointed, he went into the church of S. Carlo al Corso to pray, and after being on his knees some time he told his companion to come away with him, that they must go home, their time was not yet come, but it was not very far off. They retraced the same oft-beaten road back again to Monte Argentaro, and Paul entered the retreat after having travelled the road between his house and Rome ten times ; and he was, as far as human prudence is concerned, as far from having his rules approved now as ever, if not farther.

The rules were under consideration ; and there Paul left them, whilst he employed himself in giving the missions which were asked for by Cardinal Crescenzi.

These missions were accompanied with many proofs of a divine sanction. One extraordinary occurrence we cannot omit recording ; it is handed down in every account of the Saint's life, has been attested by living witnesses, and is engraven in a monument ; so that it rests upon human evidence of the highest character. This was a miracle which happened in a church in

Piagaro. There were several in this town who needed a mission badly, but combined among themselves to resist its influence by absenting themselves from the principal sermons, and listening to others with vaunted indifference. Paul said several times from the platform, "There are many amongst you to whom it seems a thousand years until the closing of the mission: I shall leave one behind me who will carry on the mission much better than I." At the last sermon he said, pointing to a large crucifix which was venerated on one of the altars in the church: "When I am gone, this crucifix will preach." He gave the papal blessing, and went away immediately. A great crowd escorted him part of the way, but a greater number remained behind in the church praying before the crucifix to which he had alluded. In a short time they saw streams of a bluish fluid ooze from the figure upon the cross. They all shouted "a miracle!" an immense crowd flocked to the church, and sighs of repentance rent its sacred walls. The priest went upon the altar, and called out in the hearing of all, "My people, my sins are the cause of this." He then wiped off the sacred fluid, and its stains upon the white handkerchief remained to attest its reality. Messengers were posted after the Saint, and when they had related what happened: he said, "Yes, I knew that; what was the colour of the sweat?" "Light blue," they answered. "That is a good sign," rejoined the Saint, and he went on his way. It wrought wonderful effects in the town, and in a few years they built a chapel expressly for the miraculous cross, which remains

there to this day with this inscription on marble under it.

D. O. M.

HÆC IMAGO CHRISTI F CRUCE PENDENTIS
POST HABITAM A P. PAULO DE CRUCE E MONTE ARGENTARO
SACRAM MISSIONEM
SPECTANTE ET INGEMISCENTE POPULO PLAGARENSI
CÆRULEO SUDORE MANAVIT
DIE XI MAJI ANNI MDCCXXXVIII.

CHAPTER XX

HIS MANNER OF DIRECTION.

FATHER PAUL is now at the head of a fervent community, awaiting in patience the moment when Providence shall dispose matters according to his desires, and it is time we should pay a visit to the retreat, and see how he dealt with the subjects who had put themselves under his direction.

All revered him as a Saint, and a Saint of no ordinary gifts. He could tell their interior as plainly as if they had confessed themselves ; and so generally was this known that it was a usual saying among his clerical and religious visitors, "One ought to go to confession before going to see Father Paul." His prudence was as remarkable. He took great pains to find out the measure of each man's capacity, and to suit the employments he assigned them to their talents and virtues. He was very exact in the observance of the rules himself, and required a corresponding exactitude from his subjects. This, however, he did with a peculiar grace. The policeman system of watching out for faults in order to scrape together matter for scolding formed no part of his government. He was even averse to the religious being too ready to report the faults of their companions. His great idea was encouragement. He was always encouraging the young religious especially. Many a splendid subject of fine talents, and good pro-

mises for virtue, is broken into a mean, cowardly, frustrate saint, by too much pounding and lecturing. What they want is allurements to virtue, and a lightening of the heaviness of a religious discipline. To do this, and at the same time not engender a too worldly spirit, nor give the reins too freely to boyish frivolity, is the great mean in directing the young. S. Paul was perfection itself in this point. If he had to reprove the novices, they need only go on their knees or humble themselves, and he would give up at once, saying, with a fatherly smile, "Who could scold you now? you have vanquished me." In the words of the Venerable Vincent Strambi, "He inculcated courage, confidence, and holy freedom. He was a great enemy to scruples, and to everything which disturbed the peace of an intimate union with God." One day he thus spoke to his brethren in the Retreat of the Presentation: "I well know that young beginners in the Divine service are apt to be discouraged on account of the imperfections into which they fall. But whenever you find yourselves inclined to fear, lift up your hearts lovingly to God, and be assured that your defects are, in the sight of His infinite goodness, but as a few threads of tow cast into a sea of fire. Figure to yourselves a burning furnace as vast as the hemisphere we inhabit; if a piece of tow were thrown into it, would it not disappear instantly? Now, our God is a consuming fire, as it is written, 'Deus noster ignis consumens est,' and our imperfections, compared with His goodness, are as a piece of tow to a furnace. When, therefore, we have fallen, let us humble ourselves sorrowfully in His presence, and then, with an act of

unbounded confidence, let us throw ourselves into the ocean of His goodness, where every failing will be cancelled, and doubt will be turned into love." To a religious who was always timid and fearful he said : " Would a father, who carried a child in his arms, throw it on the ground on purpose ? And even if an earthly father might do this, our heavenly Father could not. Courage must be your motto in the service of God." " If your eternal salvation," he wrote to a child of his, " were in your own hands you might well tremble ; but, being in the hands of your heavenly Father, what need you fear ? "

His principle in the guidance of souls was to cleave the log according to the grain, and not against it. The way he put it was : " Every one must have such food as suits his stomach : give the young milk and sweetness, the old stronger food." " Let mercy always be uppermost " was another. " If I were thirty years younger," he said once, " I should go through the world and preach nothing but the mercy of God." His spirit would lead us to expect him to be on the dull side of spirituality ; but he was always on the cheerful and merciful side. Saints are always so, with only an exception or two which proves the rule. It is a singular thing that our mildest and easiest theologies have been written by saints. We find a code of morals digested by some austere theologian which makes mortal sins out of everything, and we find the saint, who perhaps never committed one in his life, just the contrary. It is the Spirit of our Lord. He blamed the Pharisees for putting burdens upon people which they would not raise a finger to move, and He Himself

gave no one severe precept, but left severity to His counsels. S. Paul used to look after his young theologians with a special care. He was most anxious that they should be well grounded in dogma and acquainted with the controversies of faith. Pure scholastic questions, which do little besides setting theologian against theologian, without profit to faith, hope, or charity, he would have them put aside; and there is a clause inserted in the rules to that effect. If his advice were followed, we should not find men squandering time in guessing at the meaning of obscure passages in S. Thomas, which could be far more profitably spent in studying to understand him when he speaks clearly. The lectors used to say that all their books and dissertations were not worth one ounce of the wisdom which their father could bring out in a single sentence. One anecdote is told to illustrate this. Priests all know what mental tortures students undergo in studying the treatise on Predestination. The clear meeting of free will and fore-knowledge, and the difficulty of reconciling both, is heightened to a great degree of perplexity when a student applies the abstract question to himself. Once there were a number of students in a dreadful state when upon this question, and the Saint settled all their troubles very easily. He simply said, from the Athanasian creed: "*Qui bona egerunt, ibunt in vitam æternam: qui vero mala, in ignem æternum. Hæc est fides catholica.*" And their doubts vanished at once. "Courage! courage!" was his motto for all, and the watchword which gave himself a safe conduct through the trials which beset continually his crucified life.

In the correction of delinquents he brought out the same spirit. Correction is a medicine, and like every other drug, can only be taken against innate repugnance. The great secret in administering it is to sweeten it with charity—except in extreme cases where spiritual amputation or caustic is necessary. Venerable Strambi gives the following account of S. Paul's corrections :—
“ In correction he did not disguise the evil nor flatter, but, if necessary, he made use of fire and sword ; he knew, however, how to use both with admirable discretion and skill. He did not abuse or terrify ; he never allowed himself to be carried away by passion. He so tempered whatever was likely to be disagreeable, that the corrected one felt it was harder to his kind father to reprove than it was for him to hear the reproof.”
He even went roundabout, and gave his reproofs in a spirit of sadness caused by the fact of their being needed. He was once slighted by a father who wrote to some secular without writing to him, as he was bound to do, and this is the way the Saint resented it : “ I know that Father N. has written to a friend in Orbetello, without having the charity to console poor Paul, who has always loved and esteemed him, and the others have done the same. I do not know the reason, unless I attribute it to my sins.” His maxim on the point was that a mild correction cures every wound, but a harsh one makes ten for the one it tries to remedy. He used to correct the superiors of our retreats if they failed in mildness. He writes thus to one of them :—“ I have heard that your reverence, in the lectures to the religious, makes use of very strong exclamations, as if you were giving a mission to a

parcel of whiskered and mustachioed gentry. But, dear F. Rector, why do you do so? I praise your zeal, and I know that it springs from a strong wish for the observance; but the truth is our poor religious are really very good, and there is no need for all this flurry and thunder. Work with sweetness, speak with peace of mind, do not force your voice; and believe me that it will strike more, and do more good, and the religious will be more satisfied."

His principle was, with regard to religious, not to attend to numbers. "Few but good," was his notion. He never had a difficulty in sending away unworthy members; but he tried everything before he let them go. He writes about one of his *mauvais sujets*:—"Father N. makes really great efforts to be good, notwithstanding the habits he has contracted in the world, and this is a reason which ought to make us somewhat more compassionate, and be satisfied if he observe the rules, at least, in essentials. When he fails, well, be kind to him; use a great measure of charity in correcting him. It will be a great thing if we can gain him to God." Like him of whom we read: "*Arun-dinem quassatum non confringet, et linum fumigams non extinguet.*" He will not crush the bruised reed, and the smoking flax He will not extinguish.

We should expect from his spirit of prayer that he would be inclined to favour souls who tried to soar high in contemplation, because we imagine the contemplative life takes a person some few degrees above the ordinary level of common sense. An acquaintance with the lives of the great contemplatives, such as S. John Climacus, S. John of the Cross, or S. Teresa, will very

soon convince any one that the greatest height of contemplation, and the most thorough practical good sense are always united together. There is one difference between the good sense acquired through prayer, and that which nature gives without it, that the former sees with the light of heaven in addition to its own, a blessing which the other cannot aspire to. S. Paul was singularly cautious about high flights in prayer, except they came after long trials and accompanied with the real signs of the Spirit of God. He had had experience in all the ways of the purgative and unitive life himself, and he knew that they were associated with anything but the gushing sweetness of young piety. He writes :—" Of what use are these imaginations of visions ? Oh ! they are dangerous things, in which the devil plays an ugly game ! the malicious wretch is not in a hurry, but goes on quietly, the better to deceive." Again :—" These visions, elevations, illuminations, and so forth, are to be suspected in proportion to their frequency. ' It is better,' says a great saint, ' always to reject them, to drive them away with constancy, and never trust to them, especially in the case of women, whose imagination is so lively.' By acting thus we do wisely ; for, if they be from God, they will have their effect even though they be rejected ; and, if they come from the devil, as is likely, by repelling them we escape delusion."

The Saint had a great many holy souls under his direction, but he always tried to break down that foolish personal devotion which some penitents get for their confessor. If he had his choice, he would always be hearing brigands, beggars, ignorant, stupid, negligent,

and hardened consciences. On the missions the most wretched were always seen around his box, and they considered themselves privileged to keep everybody else away, which they did often with very little ceremony. So remarkable was the Saint's leaning towards the greatest sinners, that people in scolding each other, could not say anything harder than "I think you'd better go to confession to Father Paul of the Cross," or, "you want Father Paul, I think."

His direction, as has been remarked, adapted itself to every state, and there was nothing he inculcated so much upon priests as the same great rule.

To retired souls this was the way he spoke: "Look upon the world with the same horror as you would upon a criminal hanging on a gibbet, and be assured that there is little to be found therein, except an atmosphere poisoned by countless sins." Again: "I beg of you to shut the door on all creatures, keeping yourself closely entrenched in the closet of your heart. Converse with your Beloved always. With others when charity or necessity requires it." "The choir and the cell," he wrote to a religious, "are the earthly paradise of the true servants of God. Delight only in these places—the choir, the cell, and the interior of your own soul. Parlours are the destruction of monasteries."

His language to people in the world with family obligations, was quite different. To a married man who wanted his advice about some extraordinary feats of piety, he wrote: "Each one ought to lead a holy life in his own state, and he who has a wife should not live like a Capuchin." He says to the same, another

time: "You are your own master, and consequently may go to the holy house if you please. Remember: '*Qui multum peregrinantur, raro santificantur.*' I think you will serve God better by watching over your family and the interests of your home." Much in the same way did he regulate the piety of one or two ladies who were upsetting the domestic arrangements of their families in order to indulge in their devotions. If S. Paul's advice was followed in this matter, it would prevent a great many rash judgments, and save piety itself from the ridicule which is sometimes brought upon it by the indiscretion of holy people in the world. To a young lady he writes: "It is best to obey your father regarding your communions; you will thus sacrifice your will to God, and keep peace with your father, whose intentions you must suppose to be good." To another,—“I must add that you should not remain so long in church every morning; make your thanksgiving and go home at once. Don't be giving occasion of complaint.”

CHAPTER XXI

FRUSTRATE VOCATIONS

EVERY event in the Saint's life which took him from Calvary to Thabor gave notice of its approach by the well-known shadow of a severe trial. His life had some few very sunny spots, but a close inspection of it in detail makes us see that they were the exceptions. They stood out by their lustre from a dark background ; but if we search beneath them we find even the ground which they covered dark also. There was a very bright event in store for our Saint towards the close of the year 1739 ; and the year itself was marked by successful missions, wonderful conversions, and a very satisfactory campaign altogether against the powers of darkness. These blessings came through toils and anxieties, but they were sufficient to make him forget what they cost in the joy which they brought him.

His greatest trial now was the desertion of some of his companions, who left the retreat and returned again to the world.

It is sometimes supposed by very well-informed people that a religious, when once he has pronounced his vows, becomes a prisoner for life. He is bound by sacred ties to the life he has begun, and no earthly bond can compare with them in importance and stringency. The obligations which we contract towards our fellow-man, be they temporary or perpetual, are

indeed to be respected and fulfilled, and it argues a sin against society to shirk them inconsiderately. But broken they may be, and broken they unfortunately are, without drawing down upon the pledge-breaker any serious note of infamy. In the ages of faith it used to be lawful to reason *à fortiori*, from the duties we owe our fellow-creatures to those we owe our Creator. And it was looked upon then as a crime of the first magnitude, known by the name of sacrilege, for a man to break a promise which he made to his God. Fire and sword were inadequate to purge the insult thus offered to our Creator, and the broken vow was but the forerunner of a broken reputation, a broken position, a broken heart, and perhaps not infrequently a broken thread of existence. This touchiness for the honour of our God was blunted or partially uprooted by the spread of anti-Catholic ideas. Still it lingers on, for it partakes of the undying nature of the Church herself; and perverted, indeed, must be the sensibilities which do not recoil at the presence of a degraded ecclesiastic living in a concubinage, which civil law tries in vain to raise to matrimony. How many thrilling fictions have found matter for sensational outpourings, in the pitiable state of a monk or nun who had riveted the fetters of vows upon themselves before they had known the world, and then pined in hopeless regret when they had discovered its charms. It ought to be clearly understood, on all hands, that no religious is handcuffed or fettered. The convent or monastery gate is open to every inmate, and they may walk out whenever they please, with the only condition that if they go out they

must stay out. Moral restraints they have, to be sure, but a perverse will, or an infatuated love of pleasure, cares little for moral restraints. Let it not be supposed that the extra obligation of a vow can frighten a person into rectitude. Why do not the flames of hell keep Christians from sin? And what worse fate can await the refractory monk than hell? The religious, after his profession, stands as free in the presence of sin as he did before he ever dreamt of the cloister; so that all the sentimentalism which is wasted on the pining prisoners of gloomy cells, is, like all unfounded sentiment, mere moonshine.

If a religious—at least with simple vows—is not disposed to plunge into sin; if he finds the life of regular discipline does not suit him; if his health breaks down under it: let him ask for a dispensation from his vows and he shall get it from Rome by the next post. He may then go upon the wide theatre of human life and act whatever part best suits him in its multifarious dramas. Such is the present discipline of the Church. No religious Order will keep a member against his will; on the contrary, if he prove a black sheep, the superiors will try every means of amendment, and if they fail, turn him out, whether he likes it or not.

Still, there is nothing so painful to one who takes the proper view of religious matters as a frustrate vocation. There is a soul whom God has called to a noble life here and to a glorious position in the kingdom of heaven; throwing aside all the great favours he has received, putting his hand to the plough and turning back, for the sake of some paltry

miserable gratification, for an inferior state of life, for a less desirable future, he places himself in the position of a fish out of water, with the prospect of leading a life disagreeable to himself and troublesome to everybody else. Saints are always trying to make others saints, and when they see one who has made great sacrifice, and taken a fair start with a favourable wind in the way of perfection, all at once turn back, it is painful beyond measure. It is a sort of peculiar pang which must be felt in order to be understood. Then there are the minor considerations of ingratitude, injustice, and cold-heartedness, which usually show themselves in those who quit a religious Order. The Order has taken them by the hand, instructed them, educated them, placed them upon the altar, has fed and clothed them without a grudge for a number of years, and there is scarcely ever the least return made for all this. Some imaginary grievance, or justly merited reprimand, blots the recollection of all the favours they have received from their minds, and stupefies them to the understanding of an argument in favour of the mother which nursed them at her bosom. Then they must defend their rash or ill-considered step, and, in nine cases out of ten, they asperse the character of the Order, in the vain hope of thereby brightening their own. Sometimes, indeed, they see their mistake, and weep bitterly over their blind folly ; but it is rarely ever they make serious efforts to regain their lost position. Many have left us, few have returned.

There is one more cause of sadness in the desertion of companions. We have loved them and confided in

them ; we have built hopes upon their future career ; we wished them well ; and, in a moment, all this is put an end to. If an enemy had done this we could have borne it ; but thou The dispensation which they receive is given upon the grounds they put forward for asking it, and in most cases these are quite insufficient, and the lawfulness of the dispensation remains matter of doubt for ever. It is hard to see those we love in such an awful position, and we quite unable to better it for them.

S. Paul of the Cross had the tenderest of hearts and the keenest of spiritual instincts. The infancy of our poor congregation was brought to the very verge of perishing by the desertion of his first companions. We have already seen how his first community was reduced by the desertion of his companions—a like calamity occurred at the time of our present narrative.

He felt the blow, but he endured it bravely. His maxim was : “ Few but good—pastors can always better manage a small flock.” Venerable Strambi tells us : “ The venerable founder had many occasions of showing his charity. He always manifested a strong desire to benefit those who, after being brought up with much difficulty, abandoned him and left the congregation. Though he was greatly displeased, he treated them with extreme kindness. He ordered that they should have refreshments before they left ; he gave them what was necessary to clothe them as seculars, according to the condition of each ; and, with a father’s care, not only gave them money, but also some provisions that they might travel home, or whithersoever they were going, comfortably. It

seemed, indeed, that to obtain some great favour from the servant of God, it was enough to have offended or displeased him." He was never cast down. He used to say: "No one is necessary in this world—if I considered for a moment that I was necessary I should think I was damned." God can from stones raise up children to Abraham, and it was remarkable that whenever members went away—who must, of course, have been some way imperfect—God generally sent excellent ones to fill their places. This was especially the case in our present instance, as shall be seen further on.

There is a striking example of the Saint's mode of acting in this particular which, at the cost of anticipating the course of events, it is well to record. His third brother, F. Anthony, was a man of great talents, a good preacher, and a zealous missionary; but he could not fall into the regular observance at all; he was of a melancholy humour, excessively concerned about his health, and did not enjoy solitude. He received a multitude of penances from time to time, was sometimes in penance for months together, and nothing could persuade his saintly brother to be indulgent to him. At length he left the Order, and went to work in his native diocese as a secular priest. After some time he saw his error, and came in tears and humility to plead for readmittance. The Saint consented to take him back; he went through another noviciate, and was numbered once more amongst the Passionist Fathers. The new start in religion carried him to the end of a year or so without his falling back into his former imperfections. At length the spirit of

rambling took possession of him, and he would rove about the woods and gardens instead of attending to his domestic duties. The Saint interdicted what he knew would lead to the outside door of the religious life; but F. Anthony felt it hard. He at length persuaded a distinguished ecclesiastic, whom F. Paul greatly respected, to plead for the addition of a few yards to his spiritual tether. The Saint said: "In what regards the chastisement of delinquents, I have no brothers." He then called F. Anthony, and said to him: "You do not do for our congregation. The cell smothers you, and you are very tender in point of health. Better you should go home. There you may do some good as a priest." His habit was taken off a second time, and he lived as a secular priest long enough to record his admiration of his saintly brother in the processes instituted for his canonization.

In the end the system of S. Paul tells to advantage. When the careless and negligent are sent away there is little danger of relaxations creeping in through their bad example. It is like pulling the weeds or blighted ears out of a good field of corn. The expulsion of a bad member tells with effect upon those who are perhaps following at ever so long a distance behind in the steps which led to such a measure. He that stands begins to take heed lest he fall, and the sad sight of frustrate vocations helps to confirm those who in fear and trembling try to keep onwards in the life they have embraced.

The reputation of the congregation cannot be said to have ever suffered from the calumnies of its expelled black sheep—indeed, no religious Order ever

has—but its good name may be obscured by them for a short time in the opinion of those who have not penetration enough to see through the veil which is thrown between them and the sanctity they once admired. In point of holiness men are more open to receive unfavourable impressions than in any other, because we feel that the profession of great virtue, if not supported by corresponding acts, is nothing but hypocrisy; and who is not angry at being taken in by a hypocrite? The Passionists have often had to endure painful things of this description, but few of them could equal those which beset the young community of Monte Argentaro in the time of S. Paul.

There was a young man of a noble family in Tuscany, who, for some cause or other, joined the congregation. He was a wolf in sheep's clothing, and seemed sent specially by the devil in order to destroy the spirit of the good religious who had the ill-luck of numbering him amongst them. In a few months Father Paul found out what sort of man he was, and sent him away instantly. He and his friends commenced a series of calumnies and misrepresentations, which led finally to the persecutions which the Passionists had first to undergo. It is not easy to form a just idea of what the holy man and his children had to suffer, when we compare it with the ovation which attended his last visit to Orbetello, but it must have gone very far when such a lover of contempt and derision as he was thought it more prudent to enter and leave the town by stealth, as if he had been fleeing from the hands of justice. To such straits was he reduced by the reports which were spread by an expelled novice.

CHAPTER XXII

APPROBATION OF THE RULES

THE austere life, coupled with its afflictions, and the few rays of joy which now and then irradiated it, was sweet to this fervent community on Monte Argentaro. What they desired, that they had—solitude, silence, prayer, and work for the salvation of others. Ambition and human passions were scarcely as much as named amongst them. Every one looked up to their holy superior, and found they had a great deal to do in trying to reach the model of perfection which he showed them for imitation. Still there was something wanting to them. They wished for nothing but to serve God; but this service they could not fulfil to perfection, until they had been built into the Church's body as one of her religious Orders. Paul saw, with his remarkable vision, that their mode of life was likely to begin and end with themselves if the Church did not give it catholicity and perpetuity. Many wise thinkers undervalue a papal blessing, and tell us naively that the world can go round without it, and that its absence will not make the bayonets fall out of the soldiers' hands. But history tells us that the blessing of the Vicar of Christ can do wonderful things, and in few instances do we see that truth so well proved as in that of the foundation of the Passionists. S. Paul was full twenty years living a

life which far excelled in austerity the life he afterwards led, at the date of our present narrative. He had preached, wrought wonderful conversions, and still more wonderful miracles; he had cured the sick, prophesied the future, discovered the hidden secrets of the seared conscience, been venerated as a saint wherever he was known, and yet his congregation had made but a few feeble attempts at growing into a religious Order, and these attempts to human eyes seemed very abortive, if not contemptible. One thing was wanting to make his order prolific: the blessing and approbation of Peter. When that came everything seemed to turn round and league itself to the furtherance of Paul's hopes. His Order increased and multiplied, and when he looks down to-day, from his throne of blessedness, and sees his disciples in every quarter of the world, he must rejoice in the blessing which prepared the way for all this, when his whole Order numbered but a few souls.

In the year 1740 Clement XII. died. He was kind and encouraging to Paul—he recognized the good he was doing, and gave him many privileges for its continuance. He gave him and his brother faculties which extended over Italy. He had done everything which could be done, but he never did anything towards confirming the new institute, with the exception of putting the rules into the hands of some theologians, who raised too many difficulties to their passing the scrutiny.

At the time of the Saint's last useless visit to Rome, Cardinal Crescenzi left that city for the nunciatore of Paris. He introduced the Saint, however, to Cardinal

Rezzonico, afterwards Clement XIII., and wished him to assume the office of protector to the new undertaking. A few conversations with Paul convinced Cardinal Rezzonico of his sanctity, and a friendship sprang up between them which never grew cold. The Saint was always welcome to lodge in the palace of his Eminence when in Rome, and a room used to be fitted up for him, which would neither offend his spirit of poverty nor mortification. The Cardinal wrote to F. Paul at one time: "It is very consoling to me to think that our Lord should have permitted me to help you in the smallest trifle, and that He should have inspired Mgr. Crescenzi to give me anything to do for you."

In the month of August, 1740, Cardinal Prosper Lambertini was elected Pope, and this was the celebrated Benedict XIV. It is generally held that this was one of the greatest Popes since S. Peter. He was a man of astonishing erudition, genius, wit, and piety. His authority, even as a private doctor, is decisive on whatever point he writes, and it was urged as the only complaint against his rule that he wrote too much. It was in his office of Promoter of the Faith, or "devil's advocate" in the canonization of saints, that his remarkable abilities got full play, before he was raised to the papacy. His experience in the examination of saints' virtues and gifts, with the quantities of old writings and documents which he was obliged to peruse, issued in that immortal work, the "Essay on Beatification and Canonization." In the matter of judging theologically of saints, living or dead, Benedict XIV. was without an equal.

When the Saint heard of Lambertini's elevation to the Chair of Peter, he wrote to the Abbate Garagni, a great friend of his, in Rome : " I felt an extraordinary commotion in my heart, such as I have never before experienced, and which inspired me with a lively hope that this was the holy and zealous pastor who was destined to restore the failing piety of Christendom." Paul hoped also that Benedict would patronize his work. He revised the rules, and changed those little matters which were objected to in the last examination. He then wrote to Cardinal Rezzonico, who went to see the Pope, and received for answer that one of the brethren should come to Rome to manage the affair. Paul came himself, and was presented to the Pope by Rezzonico. His Holiness then appointed a congregation to examine the rules, which was composed to Cardinals Corradini and Rezzonico, with the Abbate Garagni for Secretary.

A little episode in the matter of this examination deserves to be recorded. The Abbate Garagni was new in the office, and of course swept everything as clean as he possibly could. He applied the dictates of human prudence to the little book of rules which the Saint presented, and he was decided in his opinion that they contained a tissue of impossibilities. He told the Saint frankly that, so far from approving of them, he would do all in his power to prevent any one else doing so ; and the poorly clad, humble servant of God left his presence with appendices to these remarks which were anything but complimentary. The Saint and his brother could do nothing but pray, and leave the matter to God. The night after the interview

Garagni suffered from dreadful pains, and the pangs of an unaccountable remorse kept him awake all night. He examined his conscience, and saw that he had dealt rather harshly with poor Paul. He sent for him, therefore, next day, spoke with him a long time, and having perceived that he was sitting in judgment on a Saint and upon the fruit of his inspiration, he changed his mind altogether, and became henceforward the patron and promoter of the undertaking which he was deputed to scrutinize.

The examination went on, all recorded a favourable vote, and on the 30th of April, 1741, the rules were presented to the Pope. Benedict XIV. approved of them by a rescript on the 15th of May of the same year; and when he had signed his name, he is reported to have said: "*This Congregation of the Passion is the last to come into the world, and it seems it should have been the first.*" The Saint returned to his solitude with the rescript. His work was now really begun, for the Church had recognised it.

His long journeys, and his difficulties in Rome itself, were not without their blessings. They served to bring into notice his many virtues, which would otherwise have been hidden in his mountain cave. The rough treatment which he met from servants only called forth blessings. His long hours of waiting for a brief and hurried audience, his disappointments, discouragements, all worked out a way for him into the knowledge of the great people in Rome. Everybody was edified by the holy demeanour of the Saint. They spoke of him, one to the other, and when he had left in 1741 it seemed as though they had all lost a

special friend. To give one instance of his troubles whilst passing through his terms of anticipation: He was one day met by a man, who ought to understand the spirit of a saint, who began to growl and scold him for his odd dress. "Did he mean to bring religion, and especially holy fraternities, into disrepute by going about like a madman in such a fantastic garb? Affectation of penance was very good for Pharisees, but that sect ought to have been withered up by the denunciations of Our Lord." The Saint bowed in silence, and received the rebuke after his usual manner. This drove his assailant into a rage; he ran over, smote him on the face, cuffed him, knocked him down, kicked him, and walked over him. He then bustled off, perfectly satisfied with himself, as a crowd was just beginning to collect. The Saint got up quietly, bowed his head, made an act of thanksgiving, and when he arrived at the palace of some cardinal to which he was bound, he never spoke of what happened to him until the cardinal, seeing his habit soiled and full of dust, asked him what was the matter. The servant of God said that for his sins God had permitted him to be trodden under foot, but it was only what he deserved. Some stray messenger, in the meantime, gave the cardinal a full account of the scene, and he, by repeated questions, drew from the Saint a confirmation of its truth. The proper steps were of course taken for the punishment of such an outrageous breach, not only of Christian, but even of pagan decency, and the character of S. Paul was becoming brighter and brighter through the depths of his humiliations.

There is a crusty old proverb somewhere afloat about

the world which says that blessings are like angels' visits, few and far between, but that curses come like hailstones. Proverbs like this are mostly founded on experience, and if S. Paul wrote a book of proverbs he could assuredly have composed some excellent ones on this very point. It is rash to deny the truth of a proverb—just about as rash as to try to mend it—but we feel a special delight in recording a case in which a cross-grained proverb has been fairly proved by plenty of pleasing exceptions.

We have one fine instance in this period of S. Paul's life. That little bit of paper, with the Pope's name to it, was like a Christian amulet : it made everybody and everything propitious to the poor, trampled, mocked, and injured Saint. It brought a shower, of what we would call good luck, with it. Two very valuable members joined the new Order immediately. The first was F. Marc Aurelius of the Blessed Sacrament ; the second, F. Thomas of the Side of Jesus ; both priests before they entered the noviciate. One of them was our first and most famous lector and master of novices ; the other, after some years of missionary work, was made a bishop, and is better known as Monsignor Struzzieri, Bishop of Amelia. The Cardinal Abbot, Altieri, who was once very grudging towards the infant congregation, seemed to have been mollified into a very well of honey and kindness. He was the ecclesiastical superior of the retreat of Monte Argentario. He had refused every grace, and only granted what decency forbade him to refuse up to this. Now he gave permission for the holy solitaries to keep the Blessed Sacrament in their new church, and sent,

besides, as a present, a beautiful picture of the Presentation for an altar-piece. Congratulations, and wishes for success, and smiling countenances, and pleased friends, and even enemies turned bland and civil, greeted Paul on every side. The Order was now firmly established. All this occurred somewhere about the feast of Corpus Christi—we do not know the exact day—but we know that, on the reception of the rescript they all went into retreat, and in the year 1741, the first Passionists made their religious profession.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FOUNDATIONS

THE foundation of a new religious cause is a work of great importance. It is intended as an additional pillar from which the Order arches its influence across the country. It is also a work of great difficulty. Everything has to be provided—and perhaps there is not sixpence wherewith to buy them—every little article of furniture, books for the library, and for the priest's cells, altar-cloths, vestments, chalices. The inventory of what is required for the proper beginning of a new house would fill a chapter by itself. But our ancient fathers, and, in many cases, our modern ones too, have begun foundations with scarcely the necessaries of life. They have gone on, making things pay a double debt, like Goldsmith's chest of drawers, and waiting until time and opportunity put a table in their way, then a chair, and so on. In the course of a few years everything looks complete, and then the difficulties of the beginning are forgotten. Besides internal difficulties, there are external ones also. Sometimes, the neighbouring priests grumble at the too near approach of the regulars, through a mistaken idea of their tendency to encroach on their rights. All opposition must put on the appearance of zeal. It would not do for a priest who is neglecting his people, and into whose parish a bishop sends regulars in order that

they may supply for his shortcomings, to acknowledge all that ; nor would it be prudent for the newcomers to put it forth as their ostensible object. There are forty or fifty sources from which both sides can draw reasons for their acts, and of course these are brought against each other. Vested rights and old customs *versus* intrusion and new changes, carry on the suit a good while, and it not unfrequently ends, like weak cases in a court of justice, by abusing the defendant or plaintiff for want of a better ground for argument.

The good old times, when an abbot wrote a long and piteous letter to a king of France, alleging the badness of the times, the desolation of the wars, and the fewness of vocations as a palliative, because he could only afford his majesty the small number of two hundred monks to begin with, are gone. A community has frequently to be started with two priests and a lay-brother, in modern times, and perhaps even these can badly be spared from the house they leave. With all these domestic troubles at starting, a foundation is still a cheerful work. It is in its hardships that the sanctity of many a noble soul is chiselled and chastened to its perfection.

The occasions which lead to foundations are very various. One time it is a mission which makes the people wish to have a body of the missionaries continually with themselves. At other times it is a bishop, or a fervent priest who offers a house in order that they may be able to avail themselves of the labours of its new possessors. Sometimes it is a secular benefactor, and sometimes it is the superior who judges such

or such a place most advantageous for the exercise of the calling of his subjects.

S. Paul was called by Mgr. Abati, the Bishop of Viterbo, to give a mission in Vetralla, in 1742. Vetralla is a populous town in the Pontifical States, about forty miles from Civita Vecchia. We have the words of one who listened to Father Paul in this mission, and they are as follows:—"During the mission preached by F. Paul in Vetralla in 1742, he appeared all the time of his sermon on death perfectly pale, and trembling from head to foot as if the lively perception he had of the truths he announced penetrated to the very marrow of his bones. But when he preached on hell, the fear and trembling was communicated to his audience. It was a sermon never to be forgotten. And to crown all, the holy man would lay bare his shoulders and scourge himself with a discipline made of sharp blades of iron, until the blood poured down in streams. This he used to do to satisfy for our sins and show us how we ought to atone for them."

The conversions which the Saint wrought at this mission were numerous and striking. The first was a Jew whom the Venerable Strambi knew to have continued from that moment until his death, when he was attended by one of our Fathers, a most perfect model of all Christian virtues. He converted several other Jews also, of whose subsequent career we have no account. There was a reckless sinner in this town, who had scandalised and horrified his neighbours by his blasphemies. He was even known to have been guilty of blood, and there was scarcely a vice which did not seem to find a congenial soil in his wretched

conscience. He had gone to the very depths of infamy. The Saint heard of him, and determined he should try and convert him. He sent for him, spoke kindly and encouragingly to him, and invited him to attend the mission. The poor man was overcome, his wildness and his ferocity disappeared, and he became like a child. He attended not only that mission, but every mission the Saint gave for a number of years, and at length died assisted by his spiritual Father, and his last words were, "Oh! Father Paul, how much I owe you."

The labours of the Saint, signalized by these and many other remarkable evidences of Divine assistance, endeared him and his companions to the people of Vetralla. There stood at the time, in the midst of a forest, about two miles from the town, a church and hermitage which once belonged to a community of Benedictines, but had been untenanted for some time. It occurred to them that they might have the blessing of a permanent colony of Passionists in their midst if they could but persuade the Saint to accept of this deserted sanctuary. He saw the place, and its solitude delighted him. He joyfully accepted their offer, and no sooner had he done so than the usual difficulties came in the way. People never grumbled at S. Mary Magdalen as long as she was pouring ointment on her golden locks, but as soon as she poured a little on our Lord's feet, holy people said, "Whereto this waste? It might have been sold for the poor." In much the same way did some of the good people of Vetralla begin to think it a pity the hermitage and church could not be made better use of than be given to the poor mis-

sionaries. Whilst they were fox coverts, or conveniences for nest-building, they never thought about that, but now they must think and write too. Pope Benedict XIV. was not a man to be trifled with. He was too shrewd for town cliques, and he settled the matter very summarily, by sending orders to the governor to cede the hermitage called S. Angelo to the Passionists, with all the necessary rights and privileges; and the Pope moreover supplied for all the formalities, legal and otherwise, by a special law for the case in question.

About the same time another piece of good fortune happened to our Saint. There was in the diocese of Orte, not very far from Vetralla, a sanctuary dedicated to S. Eutizio, martyr. Cardinal San Clemente had placed a number of secular priests in this place to do missionary work for him; but they were obliged to give up, for some cause or other, after some time. The Pope heard of it, sent for the Cardinal, and told him to put Passionists there. A letter was despatched to the Bishop of Orte from which we make the following extract:—"His Holiness wishes to establish there some priests of a new congregation of the Passion of Jesus Christ. His Holiness has commanded me to inform your lordship of these his wishes, adding that, by his sovereign apostolic authority, he supplies for all those approbations and formalities which may be deemed necessary, and particularly for the consent of the neighbouring mendicant communities. Your lordship will therefore have the goodness to see to the immediate carrying out of His Holiness's intentions." These letters were sent off in December, 1743, and

before the new year F. Paul was in possession of three houses for his new institute.

He was not yet prepared to colonize them. He knew, however, that he soon would be, seeing that they were made for him by the Pope himself. The Saint went early in the year 1744 to Rome again, in order to thank the Holy Father, to obtain leave to shorten the noviciate of a few that he might be able to open the new houses soon, and to obtain leave also for ordaining some young priests on the title of poverty. The brief which confers this right had not yet been published.

His visit to Rome was quite successful, and he returned to Monte Argentario with a joyful heart. He and Father John Baptist gave a mission in Soriano (near S. Eutizio) by way of preparation for their coming, and the Bishop and people were enthusiastically in their favour.

On the 1st of March, 1744, the Saint received the profession of several novices, and on the following day he and nine religious set out without scrip or staff to take possession of the two new houses. They reached Vetralla on the 6th. Paul with his companions walked in procession from the church in the town to the solitude of S. Angelo; here the decree of cession was read by a notary public; they celebrated High Mass, and began their regular life inside the walls of the new retreat. They had, of course, plenty of difficulties,—little to eat, much to do and to suffer; but things went on so favourably, that shortly after the date of its foundation it became one of the best houses, and the residence of the Provincial, which it continues

to be to this day. Father John Baptist was the first Superior of this retreat. On the next day, 7th March, S. Eutizio was inaugurated after a like ceremony, and the Saint left Father Marc Aurelius in charge of this infant community.

So far things had gone on beautifully. The congregation was fairly established now. Three houses are necessary to constitute a province; and until an Order has three houses, it cannot possess all the canonical rights and privileges which religious enjoy. We find, from a careful comparison of the different accounts which reach us, that our holy founder, after the three first retreats were opened, did not found any more, if we except the hospice in Rome, until he was able to start it with twelve religious. The reason was plain. If the choir could not be kept up, the religious spirit might be easily lost; and unless there were a good number of religious in each community, the external duties would soon leave the stalls empty. Experience teaches us that his practice in this particular is worthy of imitation.

CHAPTER XXIV

HIS INTERIOR SPIRIT

IN the multitude of scenes through which our Saint is passing, we must not forget now and again to halt a little and hear something of his interior spirit. All external things are merely so many instruments for the perfecting and finishing the interior of holy souls. These reflections must benefit all. We cannot do the great things saints have done, but we can pray like them and love God like them, and try to serve Him like them. If we did but know what trifles they considered their noblest deeds to have been, we should be astonished. When we hear S. Paul answering one of his religious, who called him *a founder*, with, "I am no founder, I have spoilt the whole business by my sins," and many other things of a like nature, we are tempted to question either his sincerity or his wisdom. A man cannot fancy himself a great sinner, say we, when he knows he has not committed a mortal sin for more than half a century, and if he does not, how can he call himself one? No one will believe him, and he knows that. This must be confessed to be a fair and sensible objection to a whole volume of the good and edifying things we learn about saints. Perhaps a little sensible reasoning with ourselves would do something towards making us understand how it is that saints feel themselves great sinners,

although they have almost a certain conviction of their being exempt from mortal sin.

If any of us look back upon the past, we shall find that there have been occasions in which we have done something very foolish, or very stupid, or very awkward. We look back at these blunders, and make hypotheses in which they could have been so easily foreseen and avoided; perhaps they were not observed, or perhaps they were not so utterly stupid as they seem. But, no; there they are, and it is no use trying to mend them; we cannot blot them from memory nor from association with certain people and places; we turn upon ourselves in complete disgust, and it is well we can bear the dreadful castigation of opprobrious epithets with which we repay ourselves for these ebullitions of youthful folly. Whence is all this soreness? Simply from the sensitiveness we all have to our own good sense and propriety. We do not feel half as much ashamed of a thumping big sin as we do some peccadillo or other which made a fool of us. The sense of horror or shame we have for sin, and the consequent disgraceful position we hold in our own estimation, proceeds from the point in which our sensitiveness is touched.

Now the saints are not at all sensitive about themselves, but all their sensitiveness is about the honour of God, and they feel much the same about the slightest offence against Him as we do about the small but ugly faults above mentioned. They are, in human language, fit to kill themselves at having done the least thing against God, and they detest themselves and wonder everybody is not pointing at them with the

finger and laughing at them. There are various other theological reasons for this ; such as their clear perception of the deformity of sin, and of the hatred God has of it ; but it is not necessary to go into these points ; it is enough for us that we find a key to understand the language of saints in the one important department of speaking about themselves.

S. Paul's spirit was, like that of all great saints, formed upon a lively faith. A faith which makes itself felt and seen, and lights up the whole soul with a supernatural radiance, belonged to the saints. We believe, all the saints believed, and our faith is as theologically sound as theirs ; but it is not so bright, so penetrating, so universal. They read the whole book of human life, from cover to cover, by faith ; they see by its light into all the darknesses and fastnesses of human misery and human depravity. Faith teaches them to reverence everything which bears the sacred name of God upon it either mystically or physically. They love everything, and everything preaches to them of God and His love ; they are always looking at heaven through the beauties of the earth, and reading eternity in everything which is lasting here. They spiritualize all things, and undervalue everything except inasmuch as it helps them heavenwards.

S. Paul's faith was of a wonderful liveliness—we need no proof of that beyond his working miracles—and it was equally bright and penetrating. As Ven. Strambi says :—" He lived upon earth an exile from his country ; he kept his heart so continually lifted up to heavenly things, that his whole life might be considered a life of faith. Those who have lived with

him and heard him speak can bear testimony to this. Whenever he spoke, whether in public or in private, of the maxims of faith, he did so with such certainty, vivacity, and confidence, that one would have thought he saw them with his bodily eyes. He was ardently desirous of impressing those who heard him preach, and so well did he succeed in effecting it, that his discourse seemed not to have been composed of words so much as of darts, which pierced the very soul through. It was his custom, in familiar conversation, to introduce, with a natural ease, something about the mysteries of faith. He often made the recreation turn into a spiritual conference without our perceiving the change. One practice he inculcated with the greatest earnestness, and this was, remembering the Presence of God. He had a singular facility for making others adepts in this exercise." The corner stone of all the Saint's devotion was realizing this truth—in his own words,—“ Our own interior is a sanctuary, because it is the living temple of God, and the dwelling of the Holy Trinity. Let us enter into this temple and adore Our Lord there in spirit and truth. This is a most sublime devotion ; ‘ *Regnum Dei intra vos est.*’ Fail not to renew this belief when you study, when you work, when you eat, and when you go to bed, saying, in spirit,—‘ O Infinite Bounty ! ’ or the like.”

He would say again,—“ I cannot understand how it is that any one can be found who does not always think of God.” He seized the hand of a religious once, and said,—“ Is it not true that this skin is truly yours, that this arm, these veins, these muscles, are yours also ? It must be so because they are united to your

body. We are more certain, however, that Almighty God inhabits our souls, than that our arms belong to our bodies ; because, in proof of the one, we have only the fallible evidence of our senses, whilst in support of the other we have the infallible teaching of faith."

The Saint was so intent on God that he said one time,—“ If anybody should ask me at any moment of the day, what are you thinking about ? I think I should answer, of God.” Everything reminded him of God, and set him a-thinking on the divine perfections. He would be seen sometimes during his walks beating the flowers playfully with his stick, saying,—“ Be silent, be silent.” When somebody asked him why, he said it was because they were always preaching to him, and speaking of God. It was remarked once that he went to say the Rosary in the woods, and after being there ever so long, absorbed in God, he had not got further than “ *Pater Noster* ” of the first decade. His faith was shown in everything which betokened its presence. The feasts of the Church, her rites and ceremonies, were observed by him with peculiar devotion and exactitude.

He revered priests from the same principle of faith. Time, and his experience of all the shortcomings and want of spirit which he was sure to discover, did not lessen this respect. To the very end of his life he would rise before a priest, if able. This is the more to be wondered at, as he was the superior of priests so long himself, and had to administer correction to them, as if they were pupils. No one could give him a greater offence than by speaking ill of any priest, no matter how unworthy his life might be. The hardest

thing he was ever heard to say on this point, when speaking of the great perfection to which priests might attain if they would, was :—" Ah ! how little faith is there in the world ; if they did but know how heavenly is their dignity, they would respect it more."

His devotion and attachment to the Church was equally wonderful. He could not endure the slightest word which, even by insinuation, threw a reflection on her practice. He would say in a stern tone to the author of any such remark, with S. Cyprian,—“ He who hath not the Church for a mother, cannot have God for a father. Would you treat your mother in that way ? ” When he heard of the evil machinations, which were then rife in Italy against the Church, he was inconsolable. Every book, pamphlet, or publication which touched the Church in any way he would burn if he could, and wished he could come across their authors, in order to reprove them publicly. On the other hand, those who wrote, or spoke, or acted on the side of the Church he could not honour or praise sufficiently. It was remarked that he was always very fond of the students of the Propaganda. He used to envy them their high and noble calling.

The Saint was very devout to the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. He bowed his head always at the *Gloria Patri*, and severely reproved any of the religious who failed to do the same according to the regulations ; and it was remarked that his most frequent ejaculation was *Sanctus ! Sanctus ! Sanctus !* He said that came from heaven, and its sound brought him there in spirit. His devotion was remarkable also towards the infant Jesus, because he then contem-

plated the mystery of the Incarnation. He used especially to love to see an image of the Infant wrapped up in a few rags, on Christmas night, because, he said, "Oh, is it not humiliating to see Omnipotence like that ; and nothingness like this, moving about in conscious strength ? "

His devotion found full expression in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. There he could spend days and nights motionless in prayer. Until he had the Blessed Sacrament in a newly opened house he did not seem to be at all happy. Whenever he came near a town, as soon as he saw the church, he knelt down to adore the Blessed Sacrament kept there, and when he entered he went off straight to the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, as if by instinct. The fruit of his missions used to be seen principally in the crowds of labourers who turned into the church every evening to visit the Blessed Sacrament as they came home from their work. He introduced this beautiful custom wherever he went.

Only his devotion to the Passion, which was the all-absorbing one of his life, could equal the devotion he had to Our Blessed Lady. He began everything with her blessing. Nearly all his greatest favours were received on her feasts, and he was blessed with many surprising visions of her glory. He said one day to the students (the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was not then defined),—"This doctrine (Immaculate Conception) has not been declared an article of faith by Holy Church, but I would give my blood and sacrifice my life in torments in defence of it ; and if by doing this I did not become a martyr,

I am sure I should give great glory to this august Lady. Oh! happy me, if this might take place." In all his great troubles he used to say,—“ These are times when the Blessed Virgin comes in to help.” He never pronounced the name of Mary without bowing his head, or taking off his cap, after he began to wear one. Of course, the mystery of her life, which had the greatest attraction for him, was her sufferings at the foot of the cross.

He was devout also to the angels and saints, and many traits of this devotion are given here and there by his biographers, and are also handed down to us in the regulations he has given regarding the keeping of their festivals.

CHAPTER XXV

BRIEF, AD PASTORALIS

THE three houses which acknowledged the Saint for their superior—the Presentation, S. Angelo, and S. Eutizio, and which were governed severally by the Fathers he had appointed, might at any moment dissolve themselves into independent communities, or into no community at all, without their falling under any recognized canonical censure. The cement which keeps the disjoined houses of an order in perfect unity of government and rights had yet to come from Rome. The Order was approved generally, and so were the Rules; but they could not receive all the rights of the canons, nor come under their sway unless the Pope had established the work by a regular Brief.

The Saint had prayers said and masses offered for another important journey to Rome. Once more had he to pass by those hoary old acquaintances, the mile-stones; once more had he to go from Monsignor to Cardinal and hear objections and answer them.

The founding of a religious Order is surely no small matter. Even the job of getting the Rules approved is not the least trying of its nascent difficulties. This time Father Paul might go with great confidence. The Pope himself had founded the two new Retreats for him, and that surely was a sign that he meant and wished the new Order to spread. The Pope's favour

was not only nine-tenths but ten-tenths of the chances of success ; for he could have it all his own way if he liked. Things are not done in Rome thus. There must be the usual formalities, the congregations, the consultors, the sessions, the votes, the *dubia*, and all the rest. A book of rules passing through so many scrutinies may be as certain as a miracle which passes the rota. This process is painful at the time, but it is very encouraging to us who enjoy its fruits. We can take up that little book with the greatest confidence as well as love, when we remember all it went through before it came to be the code of laws for our life. We have an additional motive of trust in it when we remember that it was such an illustrious Pontiff as Benedict XIV. who first recognized its value.

When the Saint arrived in Rome he called upon Cardinal Albani, who obtained an audience of the Pope, and the result was that a new examination of the Rules was decreed. The congregation appointed for this task now were Cardinals Albani, Gentili, and Bezozzi, three very holy and learned men, of whom Rezzonico spoke very highly to the Saint. This examination took more than a year ; it began in 1744, and was not concluded until some time in 1746. Difficulties began to rise, and Paul had to write letters, make journeys backwards and forwards, and grope through a new forest of tribulations. What was worse, the Cardinals began to modify, and this was hard upon Paul's spirit of mortification ; they actually went so far as to require that the Saint and his companions should wear caps and sandals, and that they should partake of what was set before them when they went

to give missions. He gave in on these points, and once he had given in he would not allow any religious to make himself singular by an exemption. There is a very striking instance on record. After the Rules were confirmed on the point of eating on missions, he would not suffer any one to depart from what they prescribed. One very fervent missionary asked the Saint, when they were on a mission together, if he might abstain—quoting their own former example and the rule of S. Leonard of Port Maurice. The Saint told him, nothing of the sort could be allowed; that it would be more in accordance with humility, with the spirit of the Rules, the intentions of the Church, and the example of the Apostles, to partake of whatever was set before them.

The holy founder perceived that his sojourning in Rome in expectation of the hoped-for Brief would be loss of time; so he went home to Monte Argentaro, and awaited in patience for the dispositions of the Holy See. When he arrived in Orbetello he was taken suddenly ill. We do not know what sort of illness this was, but its symptoms were the following: He was six months suffering the acutest pain, for forty days and forty nights he could neither eat a morsel nor sleep a wink. It was piteous to hear the holy man turn to Our Lady, as he always did in distress and difficulty, and affectionately implore her for at least one hour's sleep; he then asked for half an hour, then for a quarter—but all was refused. He was, besides, troubled in mind and desolate in spirit, tormented by demons visibly and invisibly, and suffered to linger on in this painful illness without the least drop of con-

solation. Even from his bed he dictated letters to Rome, and had often to hold theological discussions on the expediency of some amendments which were proposed to the Rules. Among these we reckon the proposition that our houses of study might accept endowments. He called Father Tommaso, and they both came to the conclusion that it was better for all the houses to try and flourish by such holy poverty as was made the standard of the new Order. Paul had to endure all the hardships of his illness away from his beloved solitude on the mountain and his dear brethren.

When he was sufficiently recovered (for perfectly recovered from this illness he never was) he went home to Monte Argentario. It was not to rest, however. He was obliged to be off again to Rome. Here he was charitably and kindly received by the *Mission* Fathers who live at S. Andrea delle Fratte. Every day, when his mass was over, he was obliged to go off and pay his devoirs in several antechambers, and try and smooth the minds of the Cardinals. At length he heard there was to be a favourable verdict, and his heart warmed with enthusiasm and forgot in a moment all he had endured for this precious favour.

The Rules had to be translated into Latin, in order to be embodied in the Brief. This task was entrusted to a man of very hot temper, but of pretty cool scholarship. Whenever the Saint visited him in order to see if it were necessary to make any explanation about the original, he found him as sore and as short as possible. One day he had become extra sour, and abused the the holy man to some extent, and without much stint

of inelegant phraseology ; but when he saw him fall on his knees and beg his pardon, he was softened, became ashamed of himself, and always afterwards tried to make up for his rudeness to the Saint by extra reverence.

On the 28th March, 1746, the Pope gave orders for the expediting of the Brief, and drew out a sketch of what it was to be with his own hand. F. Paul wrote to F. Fulgentius upon hearing this piece of news :—“ Thanks be to God, on Monday in Passion Week, when the Gospel says, *Si quis sitit, veniat ad me et bibat*, the Vicar of Christ sketched out the form of the new Brief for the confirmation of our Rules. The Brief itself is now being drawn up. I was yesterday at the feet of His Holiness again, to thank him. I am still busy in arranging everything I can for the good of the congregation, and I become more convinced every day of its being God’s work. This is the feeling of every person of note in Rome—religious, prelates, and all. God has helped me wonderfully, and we may look on it as a miracle of mercy that this affair has been concluded so soon. I will tell you when the solemn thanksgiving is to be made. Meanwhile, do you continue to praise and thank the Almighty.—Rome, March 31, 1746.”

It seems the Saint left Rome immediately after he had written this letter, and another in which he says that the Brief will not be ready before Low Sunday of that year.

On the 18th April, however, the apostolic Brief, *Ad Pastoralis*, was brought to the Saint in S. Eutizio by Cardinal S. Clemente. This is the famous Brief

which first made the Passionists a religious Order or Congregation, with all the rights, privileges, and ordinances which the Church requires for a religious body. A few trifling formalities had to be gone through now, in the devising of a seal for the Order, and drawing up the ceremonies of clothing and profession. The most minute points which belong to a corporate body in the Church require careful investigation, because they are to endure for ever. The badge which our founder chose was the heart, as worn on the habit, surmounted by a cross. The *stemme* were an olive and palm branch, emblematic of mourning and victory, the two salient points in the Passion of Our Lord. All turned out more successfully than he had anticipated. His former crosses and difficulties were now receiving their reward: the good Father sent a circular to the houses for a three days' thanksgiving, and he went there to congratulate with the fathers first in S. Angelo, where his brother was superior, and next in the Presentation. When he came to Monte Argentaro he found twelve fervent postulants begging to be admitted to the habit. Here was the opportunity for forming the regular noviciate, a project he had long meditated. The noviciate is the nursery of the Order, and from the proper training of its inmates proceeds all the spirit and fervour which may be afterwards spread over the province. The conduct of a noviciate is withal a very critical problem: various characters, formed in all sorts of schools and no-schools; some trained to one sort of life, some to another; some rude, some polished; some ignorant, some instructed: all, perhaps, from different countries—come together to be drilled into

one uniform life on the sole strength of the resolution they have taken of dedicating themselves to God. The noviciate must therefore combine a number of arbitrary rules which depend for publication or abrogation upon the will of the master, because no fixed code of regulations could possibly suit the heterogeneous company which assemble in the novices' corridors.

Father Paul recalled Father Marc Aurelius from the government of S. Eutizio, and made him the first master of novices; and, on the Pentecost of that year, he vested the twelve postulants in the habit of the Order. The fervour of this body of novices has been a proverb in the Order ever since. It is of these the miraculous sight is recorded which the people of Orbetello saw. One Pentecost this good people were thrown into a panic by seeing the Retreat enveloped in flames. They went up the hill in a crowd, shouting and holloaing, carrying pails of water, and harnessing donkeys to all the water-carts of the town; but when they arrived at the Retreat they found that there was no fire at all, and that the religious had just concluded the matins of the Holy Ghost. One of those novices passed by a building every day during his year's noviciate and never saw it. Another could not tell whether there were any windows in the choir. What gave the holy founder such special delight in these young men was, that they found every religious exercise a pleasure—and joy was depicted on their countenances whenever they heard the voice of obedience. When one recollects how many things there were in their daily life—hard to flesh and blood—we must be the more charmed with seeing their joy and cheerfulness.

The good Father was not allowed to live very long in the agreeable society of his dear novices. In the spring of the year 1747, the medical men judged it necessary for him, in order to restore a constitution so much shattered by his late illness, to go to Vignone for the sake of the baths. The holy man went, and did everything which could make him uncomfortable whilst indulging in this little luxury. He walked, he fasted, he prayed, he heard confessions, preached, catechised, and hunted sinners into their dens, whilst he was in Vignone. And when he returned, after two months, his health of course was not much improved.

CHAPTER XXVI

FIRST GENERAL CHAPTER

THE system of government in religious Orders has many beautiful features which other systems have not. In them the superiors are chosen, for a time, by the free and secret votes of such as have certain qualifications for giving them. When a superior is once elected he has to govern according to the Rules ; and if he violate them seriously, or commit any canonical misdemeanour, he may be deposed from office and another substituted. This facilitates very much the observance of the vow of obedience. You obey in religion a man whom you know has been set over you according to God's ordinance, and in case he is tyrannical or imprudent you can apply to a higher authority. There is an appeal even to the Pope from any grave decision which weighs heavily on any subject. The most cursory inspection of rules would make one imagine that all the kind rules were made for subjects, and the harsh ones for superiors. The rights of subjects are everywhere strictly provided for, and, if we except the punishment of disobedience, the superior seems to be ignored, or to have a number of hard dry advices dealt out to him in order to keep him from making too absolute a use of his authority, or to warn him against admitting abuses into his community. The system in our Order proceeds as if by

a number of concentric circles. There are the General and his two Consultors for the whole Order, a Provincial and two Consultors for each province, a given number of retreats, and a superior—who is called a rector—for each retreat. Weighty matters affecting the interests of the province have to be decided by the provincial; what regards the whole Order, by the general.

A general chapter is called every six years, a provincial chapter every three years, and a local or domestic chapter whenever the rector thinks there is any matter on which the advice and discussion of the priests in the house would be useful. Laws passed at the general chapter take immediate effect, but those passed at a provincial chapter have no binding force until they be approved by the general.

The two great objects of a chapter are — first, to elect superiors for the province; and, secondly, to discuss all the circumstances which time and place give rise to as affecting the working of our rules, and to make regulations which may suit them, and at the same time not sacrifice the spirit of the rule itself.

When Benedict XIV. had published his brief *Ad Pastoralis*, he appointed the Saint superior general of the Order until the time of the chapter, which was appointed to be held in the next year. The good father had now returned from the baths; and on his arriving at Monte Argentaro the twelve novices he had clothed the year before were ready for profession. This was the first grand function in the way of professions; for when the first Passionists pronounced their vows, there was no regular ceremony prescribed.

As soon as the Saint saw what a fine body of students he could calculate upon, and saw the progress they had made in virtue during their noviciate, he resolved to transfer the master of novices with them and make him their lector or professor. Accordingly, early in March, 1747, Father Marc Aurelius and his twelve disciples started off for S. Angelo, where F. John Baptist was superior, there to begin their ecclesiastical studies. Great things are recorded of this holy twelve, even when students. They practised to the end the virtues of the noviciate, and even so rigid a man as F. John Baptist was obliged to be continually restraining their fervour. The last confirmation of the Rules gave leave for sandals ; but these fervent youths implored so fervently for a dispensation to go barefoot altogether that the holy founder could not refuse them. There came a very severe winter during the first year of their sojourn in S. Angelo ; and a winter in Italy is very trying, especially since they had not learnt in those days—and we question whether they have yet thoroughly been indoctrinated into—the northern luxury of grates and blazing fires. There used to be a fire in the kitchen whilst victuals were being cooked in the first days of our Order, and the rest of the time the poor religious might warm themselves as they could. The first students of S. Angelo would not go near a fire even if there had been one, and they endured cold to such an extent that the nails were frozen off their toes and fingers. The superiors had at length to interfere, or they would have killed themselves with their mortifications. Some of those students developed afterwards into those famous old superiors, whose lives were proposed as models to

after generations whenever they felt inclined to be tender to themselves.

S. Paul had a great predilection for this retreat of S. Angelo. He had here a cell after his own heart : a cell which it would puzzle an architect to define. It had a great many corners, was narrow, crooked, uneven, damp, cold, and ugly. It admitted enough light in the day-time to enable one to say it might be day, and it was neither long enough for the Saint to stretch himself at full length in bed, nor high enough to allow him to stand erect. Many a holy conference was holden in that cell ; many a wavering heart was there comforted ; and many a grand project for the well-being of the Order was there brought to maturity by prayer and fasting.

In the Retreat of the Presentation, on Monte Argentario, on the 10th April, 1747, Father Paul and his companions held the first general chapter of the Order. The numbers were indeed small, and few had passed the time in the Order necessary to qualify them for the active and passive voice. There were few hoary heads there, and not a great quantity of the collective wisdom with which experience in ruling enriches the usual capitular fathers. But there was holiness there, and heroic sanctity ; there was singleness of mind and humility. The fathers opened the chapter according to our present custom—for all their solemn acts became precedents for after times—they held the usual discussions upon the merits of each father present. This is a severe scrutiny. Each father, from the ex-provincial to the master of novices, has to leave the chapter room in turn, and then all have to say what they know

about him. An oath of secrecy is taken upon what is heard in chapter, but the judgments may be formed which will decide the voting papers. The votes were passed, and Father Paul of the Cross was unanimously elected first General of the Order. There was only one vote not for him, and that was his own. The fewness of fathers obliged them to add another burden to that of general, and they chose him also rector of the Presentation. We have already given an idea of how the Saint exercised his authority ; still we cannot resist the temptation of quoting another passage on the point from Ven. Strambi, since he knew our holy father so well : “ His government was the very ideal of a just and religious rule, a rule in which prudence directed every step, in which firmness was tempered by sweetness, and in which charity was the mainspring of the whole. Nothing was ever done until Almighty God had been first consulted, and it may be truly said that he learnt first in heaven what he afterwards taught upon earth. Hence came those marvellous evidences of consummate wisdom in his disciplinary or other ordinances. The good father knew how to insinuate himself into each one’s heart, and make himself more loved than feared. His exhortations scarcely ever failed in the immediate effects which were expected from them. He was more solicitous about intentions than actions ; and would not hesitate to undertake long journeys if he knew that any religious required his special direction.”

One of the chief duties of a General or Provincial is to go regularly and visit the different houses under his charge. This visit must be very searching. He

has to examine all the accounts, all the different apartments are to be looked at, to see if there be anything in them superfluous or against the spirit of poverty. Then each religious has a private talk with the visitor, in which he is obliged to lay open his mind, and to tell faithfully if anything be done in the community against the rules or constitutions. The visitor cannot mention any secret information he has received, and if it be important he will oblige the deponent to tell it him in such a manner as that he can make use of it for the benefit of delinquents. This searching visit is always paid at a convenient time of the year when all the brethren may be at home. It lasts several days, and, nearly each day, the visitor delivers a lecture, either reproving or encouraging as the case may be, to the assembled religious. When he has satisfied himself that not a single stone has been left unturned in the community, under which the smallest scrap of information could be found, he closes the visit by marking out what things have to be improved, and reprobating any abuses which might have crept in since the last visit.

The Saint was very punctual in his visitations. Ven. Strambi says of them: "The Saint's chief anxiety was to reach the retreat he was about to visit at a convenient hour so as not to disturb the religious nor inconvenience the brothers who were employed in the domestic affairs. Directly he entered the house, without losing a moment, he opened the visit with the usual ceremonies; and, as long as it lasted, he devoted himself with the utmost patience and charity to listening to all his dear children had severally to say to him. If

he perceived the slightest relaxation or abuse in the community, he laid aside all human respect and rested not until he made the due correction and eradicated the evil. He was careful, according to his usual way, to inspire all with courage and fresh energy. He left each retreat in peace and fervour on his departure, and the joy and tranquillity diffused over it would tell of the benign effects of his visit for a long time." Besides this, he was ever ready to assist his brethren by letter. And in point of writing letters—numbers of which he used to send off every day in after life—he never delayed to reply to them. *Bis dat qui cito dat*, was his maxim on this point. He always attended to the post, and took care that every one who wrote to him should have a reply in due time and at the earliest convenience. He was an invaluable correspondent, and many of his letters are still preserved as oracles of wisdom.

CHAPTER XXVII

HIS HUMILITY

S. AUGUSTINE says if you ask me what is the first virtue, I shall answer, humility—the second, humility—the third, humility—and so on, as long as you like. Be humble and you will be everything. This great virtue of humility is seldom valued as it ought to be. We have a notion that pluck, self-respect, and a certain code of honour ought to distinguish the genuine hero. It is in vain that preachers quote S. Augustine and the example of Our Lord. We believe them perchance at the time, but the first opportunity of practising humility finds us putting ourselves on our mettle, and growing indignant at an imaginary insult. Indeed, we have gotten so far in modern civilization, that a love to be despised is associated with the ignoble character of Mawworm. It ought to occur sometimes to great philosophers that it is one of the noblest feats of human nature to be able to command ourselves and our passions. It ought also to occur to them, even as a problem, that it is a queer thing that everybody hates a boaster, and loves a man who is reserved and modest with regard to his own exploits. It is a very singular phenomenon that pride likes to be always clad in the vesture of humility—or, in the terms of old ascetics, people will have humility with a hook if they cannot manage to get the real thing.

Hypocrisy is called by some the homage which vice pays to virtue ; and although pride is making Eastern bows every day, and offering incense to humility, few will be found to undervalue pride, provided it is fashionably and gracefully practised. Perhaps it would not be far off the mark if we supposed that pride was receiving in these times a great share of the homage which was paid in the ages of faith to humility.

The humble man seems a spiritless, easy-going, insensitive sort of person, who cannot feel insults meant to hurt him, nor screw his moral courage up to the pitch of fighting for what he thinks right. He may be a holy man, and a bad king like Henry VI. ; but he will never be the favourite of the mob, if he be not gifted with unseasonable courage. Some sort of arrangement might be made whereby a satisfactory compromise would succeed in pleasing the world, and in fulfilling the *beau-ideal* of the Gospel. A man might be brave, heroic, and self-sufficient, and withal modest in his pretensions, and obsequious to the wishes of others. This looks a very nice mood of mind to be in ; but it is not humility. Humility is something deeper and more supernatural than the virtues of Coriolanus. Humility is an abiding sense of our own unworthiness, and a great reverence for the majesty of God. It is truth undisguised by self-love. It was the great virtue Our Lord recommended to His followers, when He said, " Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart."

All the saints have been remarkably humble. There are various ways in which this humility is manifested, and five-sixths of those ways are misunderstood.

Saints may speak disparagingly of themselves, do things which are beneath their rank and position, and write extraordinary things which must proceed from the certain possession of humility ; but whilst we read all these things, it must be confessed that we fancy humility with a hook could do just as much. We make, perhaps, an act of faith in the wonderful ways of saints, and keep ourselves aloof from criticism, whilst we go on to something more congenial to our own feelings. We forget that the virtues and sayings of the saints can stand the severest tests of criticism, and that they have *de facto* stood them and passed through them, by the very fact that their canonization has been decreed.

This being premised, we must lay down a little theorem about the point of humility. Let it be first shown that the humility of the saints is genuine, and then we may take all their low estimate of themselves as coming from their hearts.

Our Saint acknowledged to his director once that he never had to confess a sin of pride. That alone speaks volumes. Here is the clear manifestation of a well-regulated interior. He knew himself too well ; and the contempts which this knowledge engendered, as well as the continual effort he made through life, by his habit, his mode of living, and his seeking after humiliations as others do after honours, clearly prove his humility. There is, however, one instance recorded in his life which puts the matter more clearly before us. He heard by chance that Father Fulgentius (who was the second master of novices in our Order) had a quantity of papers in Monte Argentaro which

related to the earlier years of the Saint, and that he had had them attested in Alessandria. It was understood, of course, that these papers were a sort of preparation for the future processes. It was an unfortunate thing, in one sense, that the chatty religious, who could not keep this much information to himself, told our holy father of it; but it was lucky he did on account of the proof it gave us of his humility. We do not know in which retreat he received this information; but, next morning, the Saint was seen walking off nobody knew where. He never halted until he arrived at the Presentation. It was late in the evening, and he called F. Fulgentius to him, and asked him if it were true that he had the papers about which he had heard somebody speak. The poor rector had to confess he had. "Well," said the Saint, "let me see them, please." The Father knew the Saint's propensity in all points in which self was concerned, and fearing to disobey, begged for a little respite. He said the papers could not easily be got at that hour of the night, that he was sleepy, and half a dozen things besides. "Very well," said the Saint, "let me have them first thing in the morning." F. Fulgentius promised to do so. In the meantime, he set a whole dozen of religious to work, and all the papers were copied out before morning. In the morning he gave the holy founder the MS. original, and no sooner did he get it into his hands than he placed it behind the fire, saying,—“You would have records, forsooth, of this old sinner.”

It was his usual custom, when he concluded a mission, to steal away privately out of the town, to avoid any expression of the people's feelings, lest

they might hurt humility. He was most ingenious in the contrivances he invented both for concealing his great sanctity and persuading others of his unworthiness. In fact, he seemed to be unable to endure anything which turned to his honour; what other very holy men would be rejoiced at, inasmuch as it spread their influence, and helped them to do greater things for God, were an abomination to the Saint. Nothing would satisfy him but the contempt of the whole world for what he termed his unworthiness.

He was very fond of those who offended or injured him. Once a very influential priest spoke against him, and nothing would satisfy him, when he heard this priest was very ill, except to be allowed to go and nurse him until death. Another time he came to make the visitation in S. Eutizio, and the then rector, a Padre Stefano, received him very coldly and rather disrespectfully. The religious were highly disgusted at this; and what was their delight when they heard the rector receive a well-merited rebuke. The Saint said,—“He was not quite a dirty rag, but that he was come there in obedience to our constitutions to assist such souls in the community as wished to become more perfect.” They were surprised, however, on the following day, when they heard the Father-General ask publicly pardon of all the religious for the scandal he had given them.

A person could not offend the Saint more than by praising him. He had an innate abhorrence of anything like flattery, which took definite shape whenever there was occasion for its showing itself. When he could not very well rebut the serious accusations of

goodness which some friends brought against him in the retreat of S. Michael, he waited till they were gone, and then wept like a child, exclaiming,—“ I hope I never tried to deceive anybody, and yet I find many excellent people are deceived in me.”

It was remarked that the Saint was never known to be elated. No matter what happened, or how prosperously anything succeeded, or how joyous he might be at a prosperous event, there was always a qualification. He seemed to recollect that he was a sinner, and that it was a great mercy the earth bore him. Moreover, he felt quite sure that were it not for his sins, everything would have been favourable long before the time of his joy. Then, everything which might give satisfaction to one so long despised and neglected, gave him, on the contrary, the greatest concern. He could not bear to be called founder, and used often to say, “ I hope, some fine day, to get rid of this *reverendissimo*, the title is very painful to me.” In point of fact, he petitioned the Holy See several times, and made most thrilling exhortations to the capitulars in order to make them follow the rule and let him out of office when the time was expired. It was all to no purpose. Five different times was he elected General, and three times did the Fathers get the Pope’s dispensation for such an election. Nay, the Popes themselves, who severally governed the Church from Benedict XIV. to Pius VI., were always in favour of his continuing in office. He died General. His being held in high esteem by great people was an affliction to him. In fact, he derived afflicting thoughts from those things which fill others with complacency.

If he allowed himself any distinction whilst in the highest position of authority in the Order, they were just according to his own heart. He had the worst cell in every retreat; he tried to get the worst pittance in the refectory; he had the worst habit, the worst sandals, and the worst biretta in the house. He never allowed anyone even to sweep his room, and he did all the menial services for himself and the sick members of the house in which he happened to reside. Every shape and form of humility found its place in the actions of the Saint. An injury or insult made him rejoice, and the least attempt at praise made him sad of heart.

The surest index of humility is a love of the poor. Father Paul loved the poor with a peculiar affection. He would not allow the lay brother to give them food which was broken or spoiled. They must have what he would give Our Lord Himself if He came to ask for a meal. He visited them in their dens of squalor and misery, and felt himself at home in their filth, stench, and offensiveness. He wished, when it was possible, to associate with them, and loved their rudeness and stolidity. Great was his power over the hearts of the poor in consequence, and it was affecting to see how they claimed him as their own. In some retreats, they were obliged to hide what was wanted for the refectory, or the good father would have given it to the poor. One day he was out on a mission of charity with another father, and a kind benefactor gave them a gold coin by way of alms. On their return they met a case of great distress, and the father told his companion to give away the coin they had just received,

We have spoken already of his zeal for bandits, robbers, and public sinners, and how he was venerated by them, to the great profit of their own poor souls. This was but a part of his general spirit of humiliation, derived from a continual meditation on his crucified Redeemer. We can understand such a man as that exclaiming towards the end of his life,—“ Ah, poor Paul, how many years of life have I seen—how many sacraments, how many graces have I received—how many masses have I said—how many missions and retreats have I given—how many confessions have I heard—how many other sacraments have I administered? and, after all, how will it fare with me before the tribunal of God? ” “ But,” he would add, “ I do not despond; I trust in the merits of the Passion and death of Jesus Christ.”

The remembrance of the numbers he had brought to repentance, and after having cleansed from sin, put into the way of serving God perfectly, could not elate him. Were they guilty of a thousand horrible crimes, he said that, after giving them absolution, he could have knelt down and venerated them, for he knew they were in the grace of God, whereas he could not tell whether himself was not deserving of perdition.

CHAPTER XXVIII

OTHER FOUNDATIONS

THE name of the new Order was sounding throughout the Italian peninsula more and more every day. People talked about their austere life, their fervour in the missions, and the wonders which the Saint was working wherever he went. Catholics like to live near good, holy religious ; they admire their virtues ; and if they hear their bells at midnight, when they themselves are engaged, perhaps, in recreation or worldly dissipation, they very often contrast the lives they are leading with their own, and receive grace to follow the good example even at a distance. They like also to have fervent religious near them in order that they may benefit by their prayers and have the happiness of leading a holy life under their direction. Indeed religious orders owe their propagation, in great measure, to the piety of the laity. It is they who defray the expenses of their foundations, and support them afterwards by their cheerful offerings ; it is they also who give them the field whereon they are to exercise their labours and second all their efforts in furthering the ends of their institution.

The reputation of the Saint and his companions had travelled from the north of Italy, through Rome, down to the Campagna, and here in the little town of Ceccano the clergy and people held a meeting at

which it was unanimously resolved to send for a colony of Passionists. This wish was made known to the Saint in the year 1747. He was delighted with the prospect of his Order extending itself beyond the small range of the three existent retreats; but he would not have the people disappointed, by their getting perhaps a community which did not come up to their expectations. Having heard the Bishop's will in the matter, he sent Father Thomas of the Side of Jesus, and another priest, to give some missions in the neighbourhood of the future retreat. These missions were more than proof of their great holiness; the fervent preaching, and the fierce disciplines, with the supernatural power which softens the obdurate and gathers crowds around the confessionals, did their work. If the people wished for them before, they were on the point of demanding them now; enthusiasm lit up the whole neighbourhood, and nothing was talked about, even in the taverns, but the advent of the holy missionaries who were to be the new citizens of the place.

In the beginning of January, 1748, Paul and a few companions set out, as usual, without staff or scrip, for an eight days' journey southwards. They took the unfrequented ways, for the sake of the solitude; and their choice gave them the additional blessing of being beautifully unprovided with necessaries during their journey. When they approached Ceccano, the snow covered the ground, and it was still falling as the assemblage of the civic dignitaries went out to meet the missionaries and receive them in state. They were conducted to the abode of one Abbate Angeletti; and on the next day after their arrival, the 14th January,

the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, they went with the Bishop of Ferentino, Monsignor Borgia, and took possession of the new retreat, which was called Santa Maria di Corniano.

A large concourse of people assembled to witness this ceremony, and some refreshments were got ready for them when it was over. The wine ran short, on account of some unforeseen accident, and the Saint wrought a miracle very like that of the marriage of Cana. They had but one large vessel from which the wine had been poured out. The Saint told them to try it again; they turned it upside down and began to laugh. At length somebody thought the Saint was about to work a miracle; he applied the vessel to his mouth, and a copious draught rewarded him for his confidence. Hereupon they all brought their goblets and found as much wine in the once exhausted vessel as they were able or willing to drink. Of course, this wonder was noised abroad, and the foundation of Ceccano was a most auspicious opening for the Passionists in that part of the country.

The Saint appointed F. Tommaso rector of this new retreat, and employed his own time in evangelizing the people around. It was remarked by some of the fathers in S. Angelo as an odd thing, that F. John Baptist should be exhorting the religious every day to pray hard for his brother; but they saw the meaning of it when the holy man was taken seriously ill a few days after the foundation. The illness did not continue long; for we find him on his way back to S. Angelo and Monte Argentaro, and calling to see the Pope as he passed through Rome. It was in Rome he heard of the opposi-

tion which was brewing against himself and the new Order, and which came to a head a few months later. Perhaps it was for this that F. John Baptist had the prayers said. We defer the account of these disagreeable proceedings to another chapter.

Before the Saint left Ceccano he had entered into negotiations with the Bishop of the place about a new foundation in Terracina. This was not carried into effect for some time afterwards, but the circumstances which led to its initiation are rather curious. He and F. John Baptist were once travelling along a mound near this town which contained the ruins of an old palace belonging to the Emperor Galba. It struck Paul that it would be a capital site for a retreat, and when, lying ill in Ceccano, he had to write to the Bishop to thank him for an alms he had sent to the infant community, he proposed his ideas to his lordship. The Bishop was highly pleased, and promised him five hundred scudi to assist him in rearing a religious edifice over the remains of pagan splendour. Paul could not afford to begin the house at the time, as he was in treaty about another retreat in Toscanella, a little town near Vetralla, where he had already a house. This foundation was quite different from that we have just spoken of.

The Saint started from Monte Argentaro with the little band who were to colonize the new retreat at Toscanella. The Bishop had written to Rome for permission for this foundation, and said in his letter, among other things, " Father Paul, the founder of the new institute, will doubtless be most useful with his companions in sanctifying the spot called Santa Maria del Cerro. They have already made themselves famous

by their success in converting and instructing the people, and I can assure your Eminence of their efficiency since I have listened myself to several missions which they have given in my diocese." Everything looked bright for the new house: the Pope gave a *motu proprio* approbation, cardinals were rejoiced, and the Bishop and his clergy were outdone only by the inhabitants in their glad congratulations.

But everything else seemed adverse. The weather itself turned against the religious. It blew a north March wind, with sleet and rain, to oppose their journey, and when they arrived in the village they were quite exhausted. They always came unprovided, and this time everybody else seemed to be as heedless about their material comforts as they were themselves. The house was not ready, there were no provisions, nor even a bed to lie on; but these trifles did not deter the servant of God. The Bishop wished him to defer the foundation some weeks; but to no purpose. He then went with his brethren, and the Bishop at their head, and obtained possession of the shattered old dwelling such as it was. This occurred on the 27th March, 1748.

Paul seldom complained of hardships; indeed he was more likely to complain if he were not in the midst of them; but in a confidential letter to Father Fulgentius, the master of novices in Monte Argentaro, he says: "Besides my bodily ailments, I have to endure great troubles of mind. No retreat has been yet founded in such poverty as this. I have had to suffer on other occasions, but God alone knows how much I have had to suffer this time. I will hope for the best. The religious are contented and cheerful."

He describes how they fared another day in this laconic phrase: "As this is a fast day, we shall make but a slender breakfast, and trust to Providence for supper." They were one whole day without food, except that the good father gave what was in the house to the younger fathers, since they might be injured by too long a fast. On the day in which they trusted to Providence for supper an unknown benefactor left a basket of provisions at the door towards evening, and having rung the bell disappeared. They could never find out who it was. When the provisions were brought in, just as they were assembled in the refectory to observe as much of the rule as they could by listening to the reading and meditating upon the empty tables, they had no instruments wherewith to eat. They improvised a few dishes, and split up sticks for forks and spoons, and then made as hearty a meal as they could under the circumstances. This was the first day of difficulty in this respect in S. Maria del Cerro. Benefactors were inspired with generosity next day, and one lady alone sent her servants with several mules laden with provisions to the retreat. Several other hardships accompanied this foundation, for it is mentioned in the processes as particularly trying; but none of them have been recorded except such as we have noticed. There were other trying foundations, as we shall see further on; but this one, del Cerro, seems to have made a lasting impression on the good fathers who survived the Saint and had lived through the hard times which dated its beginning.

The Saint used always to preach to the rectors not to be too much concerned about providing for their houses. God enabled us to found them, he would say,

and He will not abandon us now when we are doing His work. He did not object to their sending a lay brother out to beg, or a priest if necessary ; but he always exhorted them not to be importunate. He would say : “ The good seculars don’t like to be teased ; and let us remember that we are in danger of losing the spirit of our vocation if we are gadding about too much.” He disapproved of the raising-the-wind method of getting money which religious are sometimes obliged to resort to when charity is cold, and won’t give unless with the chance of getting something back. S. Paul wrote to a friend, who evidently had projected some grand idea not according to the Saint’s notions for the raising of requisite funds : “ I beg you to put such a silly notion out of your head. That is not the way to provide for a house which is to be a nursery of holy souls.” A tradition is handed down, in our Order, perhaps from the founder himself, that “ all the temporal things needed for the house must come in through the choir windows.” The Saint had experienced the fruit of relying on Providence in many of his journeys, and he was not the man to let a lesson of this sort be lost.

When he was at dinner one day in this retreat of S. Maria del Cerro, the porter told him that there was a poor man at the door who wanted something to eat. The good father, seeing there was scarcely anything to spare in the larder, put his own dinner aside, and when the meal was over brought it to the poor man, and made it an excuse for lecturing him upon the state of his soul—a lecture it seems he needed very much. This retreat was remarkable for its charity to the poor, for it learnt from its own history what a painful thing it is to be hungry and have nothing to eat.

CHAPTER XXIX

OPPOSITION

THE foundation of the congregation of the Passion had had its own domestic difficulties to contend with up to the year 1749. Its members went about doing good, and keeping aloof from anything in the way of religious politics. They strove to keep in solitude, and stole back to their retreats as soon as their missions were over. They were all men of retiring habits, intent only upon saving their souls and helping others to do the same ; and nothing was more foreign to their spirit than mixing in any way with matters which might concern religious in general, but did not affect themselves personally. Hitherto they were allowed to go on in peace in the line their founder had chalked out for them, and fellow-workmen in the same ministry were glad to avail themselves of their assistance. They were in high favour at Rome, but it was as good, pious men who minded their own business ; and not as diplomatists or movers of great political or ecclesiastical levers. They were, therefore, too contemptible for the notice of such dignitaries as Richelieu or Mazarin, if any of the sort then existed, or were pleased to move the springs of government. Even the powerful religious Orders, who were supposed to be knee-deep in councils of State, and *au fait* of the doings of their times, thought the poor Passionists beneath their notice.

There was one class of people—and, unfortunately for the human race, such people exist in great numbers everywhere—who invested their own private ends with the heavenly armour of zeal for the glory of God, and who felt they promoted the spread of everything virtuous by putting down whatever did not square with their own notions. They were like Dean Swift's spiders, who thought the whole world was coming to a crash because their cobweb came to grief on the top of a broomstick. These wiseacres shook their heads at the renewals of fervour which the Saint and his companions stirred up wherever they appeared. They did not like these new ways,—the old style for them, a style which sent many people to heaven in easy chairs, and never shook the fear of hell over them except in some semi-pagan sermons during Lent. This thing could not be tolerated. The glory of God, and a thousand other holy and unctuous motives, stirred their zealous hearts from the very pit of their stomachs upwards, they heaved deep sighs, groaned in spirit, and forthwith set to work to put down the Saint and his institute.

Some of these malcontents were for pulling down the retreats lately opened, others were for curtailing the privileges of the new missionaries, others were for writing to the bishops and opening their eyes. Various were the plans of destruction devised for the extinction of the poor Passionists: but one grand plan put them all in the shade. It was resolved to lay a memorial before the Holy See, and have the Pope to undo all he had done, and disperse the members of the Order to the four winds of heaven. Accordingly a document was drawn up, and we give an extract from it:—

“ The undersigned ” (and they were very respectable names), “ throwing themselves with the most profound sentiments of the deepest humility at the sacred feet of your Holiness, beg most respectfully to lay before you and explain the cause of some exceeding great fears with which their loyal bosoms have of late been troubled, regarding a most unheard-of abuse which has latterly manifested itself in the hitherto respectable ranks of the religious Orders of the Church. This new-fangled thing bids fair, not only to disturb and disorganize cloistered communities, but to cause dire scandal to the whole catholic world, to cast discredit and reproach upon the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and to imperil (oh, dreadful to contemplate !) even the everlasting and infallible maxims of the orthodox faith. Such, most Holy Father (and your memorialists say it with affliction of heart), are certain wolves in sheeps’ clothing—men styling themselves missionary fathers of the most Holy Passion of Jesus Christ, who believe they can succeed in their nefarious purposes, by virtue of the title they have assumed, and the new and strange device of a pierced heart which they bear upon their habits. Desiring to distinguish themselves above all existing most holy institutes, they have won to themselves the singular prerogative of creating dissensions, exciting tumults, and disturbing both clergy and laity wherever they appear. If the spirit of this most strange body of men consist in causing lawsuits, depriving poor seculars of their property, and putting an end to all the pious and never-sufficiently-to-be-lauded customs of other mendicant Orders, it must be evident to all that if allowed to become more firmly established they shall become too powerful to be resisted.”

Benedict XIV. was too old to be caught with such chaff as this ; nevertheless he was determined to see after the different allegations. He appointed a secret congregation of cardinals, somewhat analogous to our royal commissions, to examine into the matter and see how things really stood. They went into all the particulars, and the result was a verdict not only favourable but highly flattering to the Passionists. The Pope conceived an esteem for their founder and themselves then, which, it is pleasing to record, has continued in his successors to the present day.

The work of the opposition party was not done. They had failed to carry the citadel by storm, and they would now try the power of an attack upon the outposts. The Saint foresaw what was coming, and said one day to his brethren, after announcing that a violent hurricane was arising against them : “ Sometimes it happens that a thunderbolt, darting from the clouds, falls upon a barren mountain and lays open a mine of gold. Let us hope that this storm may discover in us a similar mine, and that our Lord may make it work for our greater good.”

Petitions were now presented for the suppression of the retreat of Ceccano, and for a prohibition to found any more houses of the Order in the Campagna. To this petition they succeeded in getting the Sacred Congregation to agree. We shall describe the matter in the words of the Saint, who was obliged to go to Rome to answer all the accusations. He writes to F. Fulgentius : ‘ Our affairs go on as usual ; the tempest still threatens us, but we shall obtain the victory in Christ, after having to endure many untoward things, and having seen our cause almost overthrown. Let us continue our prayers.

Either God does not desire our poor congregation in His Church, or He intends to do great things for us. Know, beloved father, that petitions have already been presented, demanding that the retreat of Ceccano be pulled down, and no more houses founded in that part. The Sacred Congregation has granted them everything. Does your reverence still think we shall triumph? It will be so indeed, but we must go through many trials first. I am tossed upon a stormy sea, and I tell you, in confidence, that I am in desolation, *intus et foris*; tormented by devils in a horrible manner, so that I no longer seem to have faith, hope, or charity. Oh! what a state I am in! But no one knows nor perceives it." He writes again, shortly after,—“ Our affairs are still as much entangled as ever. We are summoned to appear in court; but we shall not defend ourselves, because the poor cannot afford to go to law. The devil is always on the watch for some loop-hole by which he may enter and destroy our work. I am, however, sure of this, that the congregation will flourish when I shall be no more.” Again,—“ Every one here expects we shall triumph in the end, and I too am of the same opinion; only the clouds which hang over us scarcely permit us to see the sun behind them. *Deo gratias.*”

At length matters took a favourable turn, and everything happened as the Saint expected. He thus writes when the result of the investigation was made known to him :—

“ The particular congregation appointed to examine the petition of our opponents, has decided that the consent of the ordinary, with the powers of the Brief we already possess, is sufficient to legalize our foun-

dations. As to those retreats whose extinction was determined upon, they have decreed that, with the approbation of the bishops, we may retain their peaceable possession. Marvellous things have come to pass upon this occasion. The outward persecutions have been bad enough, but the interior trials have been a great deal worse. I have been allowed to taste the bitterness of my Saviour's chalice. To-morrow I shall leave Rome, as happy as if I carried with me a bull for all the foundations in the world, because I am convinced that the good God who began the work will Himself perfect it."

The Saint did not intermit his labour at the missions, except whilst his presence was absolutely necessary in Rome. He had been in several places in Italy during this year, 1749.

What turned the scale principally in favour of the Saint and his followers were the testimonies sent to Rome by the different bishops in whose dioceses they had given missions. Bishops, priests, and people, as soon as the report of the persecution of the poor Passionists was spread, came like a man to their defence; and those who defended not themselves, but left their cause to the humility and sincerity of their founder, whilst they obeyed his rule, were not only pronounced free from every one of the imputations cast upon them, but were raised higher than ever in the estimation of the Pope, cardinals, and bishops. The scrutiny into their conduct discovered a real mine of gold, which was worked certainly to great advantage.

Cardinal Rezzonico wrote, at the Pope's bidding, a letter of condolence and congratulation to our holy founder when the case was terminated, and Benedict

himself ordered Paul and his companions to give a mission in the church of S. Giovanni dei Fiorentini, in Rome, for the jubilee of 1750. This distinctive mark of the Pope's approbation silenced the slanderers, and the charity with which Paul and his children returned good for evil, converted many of them into valuable friends.

CHAPTER XXX

ORDINARY WORK

HAPPY is the nation or man who has no history —and, of the two, the man is the happier. He glides on gently, from the cradle to the grave, undistinguished from the crowd in which he mixes, and only causing a brief sensation when he leaves the circle of his friends for ever. The greatest men—men who have bustled on the stage of life and drawn attention to their every move, because it had something extraordinary in it, have periods in their life which cannot be called exactly eventless, but which fall in so naturally with the ways of others around them that they escape observation. Peace and quiet ought to be the happiest for men ; all men of business look forward to the prospect of retiring and ending their days in contentment amid the fruits of their past labours. It may be said that there is something analogous in the lives of the saints. They shine for a time before the world which drags them out from their retirement, but they are always turning back to their cell, like the needle to the pole. It is the ordinary tenor of their lives they like best, because it is when the world is silent about them that they work most for heaven.

When the storm which was raised against the Saint and his institute subsided, he went back to Monte Argentario, and enjoyed for a time the calm he had so dearly

purchased. The next eight years of his life are passed over by his biographers in silence, except that they give us, here and there, in different parts of their works, a clue to what he was doing. He held the chapters when the time came round, made his visitation of the houses every year, sent away bad subjects and confirmed the good in their vocations, exhorted, reproved, and was the foremost in observing the rules he had written. But this was not all. He gave more missions during this time than in any equal period of his life ; and now he need not go with his single and inseparable companion, Father John Baptist ; he had several bands of missionaries already trained, and, one after another, he took them with him to show them in the vineyard how they were to put in practice the lessons they have received in the cloister. When we read that during these eight years he gave missions in the dioceses of Viterbo, Toscanella, Sutri and Nepi, Montefiascone, Corneto, and Orvieto, Bagnorea, Civita-castellana, Orte, Gallese, Porto e Sabina, Perugia, Camerino, Ferentino, Segni, Terracina, Piperno, and Sezze, we have read a long history in a few words. He had evangelized nearly the whole of the Papal States, and a great part of Tuscany.

His missions were conducted much in the same way as his children conduct them at present. Some of his severities, such as the fierce discipline to move the audience to penance, have not been introduced into other countries, and even in Italy they are confined to some parts. It is certainly a moving spectacle to see a fellow-creature worn out by austerities and hard work for our conversion, at length undo his habit across

his shoulders, and strike himself unmercifully with an instrument which draws blood at every blow, and telling us that he will not spare himself until we have pity on our own souls. But it is not a sight that would move those who understand not the spirit which prompts fervent souls to do penance for the sins of their neighbours. With such earnestness did S. Paul perform this act of penance, that once, when scourging himself in the open air, a blade broke from the discipline and bounded from his back to the roof of a neighbouring house ; at another time, a priest who went in sheer pity to take the discipline from him, got incautiously in the way, and his arm was broken by one of the strokes. The Saint cured it immediately by the sign of the cross.

When giving a mission in Bassano in 1750, some one discovered his manner of preparing a discourse. It was near the time for the sermon, and a gentleman was sent to the Saint's room to ask him for something. He made his way in without being observed, and he saw the missionary take out from under his knees, an iron plate studded over with short sharp spikes. So severe to himself, he was all charity and tenderness to his fellow-labourers. He seemed to nauseate food altogether, when on a mission, and to live supernaturally, but he never forgot that such an exalted privilege was denied to his companions. He would be sometimes so ill as to be obliged to lie in bed nearly all day. Still he heard confessions reclining on a couch, and often he had to be helped to the platform ; but as soon as he began to preach he seemed endowed with supernatural life and vigour.

A Canon of S. Lorenzo delle Grotte, in the diocese

of Montefiascone, named Don Giuseppe Paci, gives the following account of one of Father Paul's mission sermons. The Saint asked him to come in surplice on the platform and hold the crucifix, whilst he preached. The Canon gave this evidence : " As soon as the sermon began, I heard a voice, and could not tell what it was like, it seemed as the voice of a prompter—and I distinctly observed that every word Father Paul spoke I had heard already. The circumstance surprised me exceedingly, as nothing of the kind ever occurred to me before or since. I then began to try and find where the voice came from. There was no one on the platform but F. Paul and myself, and there was no one near enough to it to be heard in a whisper, I concluded therefore that the voice was supernatural. Divine it must have been (and it continued throughout the sermon), for no human words could produce such effects. There was not one present who did not weep abundantly ; and well they might, for the words of the missionary would have softened a heart of flint."

In the mission of Camerino, in the same year, the captain of a band of smugglers, who was covered with crimes, and armed to the teeth, came with his gang of ruffians to hear the Saint. It was enough, he threw aside his arms, and himself and all his followers became so penitent that they were the edification of the town. The leader led the life of a saint for fifteen years, and then died in peace with God and men, and fortified by all the rites of the Church.

It was an ordinary thing to see public sinners who had despised the warnings of priests and bishops, coming to the mission, and shouting out their confession in the

middle of the church, when they had heard a few words from the saintly preacher. Obstinate haters, and scandalous livers, were melted into charity and atonement by a visit and a few words. Devils roared from the bodies of possessed, and answered exorcists in several parts of Italy that there was nothing they were so much afraid of as Father Paul of the Cross and *the Passion*. The empire of Satan would soon come to nought were there many such men in the world. God has always raised up the men who suited His purposes—let us hope that in our days we may witness such zealous labourers as others, more favoured than we, have had the happiness of hearing and seeing in their age and country. The spirit of S. Paul must still survive, were there only subjects worthy to exercise it.

During two of the seven or eight missions which the holy man gave in Orbetello he had a hand-to-hand encounter with the devil. One night he was roused from sleep and told that the devil was carrying a soldier away; the people were running, the soldier screaming that he was being carried off, and off he was going in the air without the power of resistance. The Saint commanded the enemy to desist, exhorting the poor soldier to make an act of contrition, renounce all connection with the devil, and trust to the mercy of God and the merits of our Redeemer. After a great deal ado the devil at length left the man, who wanted to go to confession at once. The Saint put his rosary about his neck, and told him to wait till morning, and that the devil would keep away from the rosary. The soldier was preparing himself all night for confession, and in the morning made his peace with God. He led a good life

afterwards, and the devil never molested him in that open way again.

Another soldier was in a somewhat similar predicament—he went to confession to one of the companions of the Saint, and whilst occupied in telling his sins, an invisible hand began to drag him away—he clung to the confessional, but in a moment confessional, confessor, and penitent were dragged down the church, to the surprise and fright of the congregation. People ran and told the Saint that the devil was carrying off priest, penitent, and all. He hurried to the place, put the rosary of the Blessed Virgin on the soldier's neck, and took him with him, under his mantle, to the sacristy. Here he heard his confession, and the soldier was freed completely from the power of the devil. He then went into the church, and could find neither language nor gesture capable of expressing his joy at being in the grace of God once more. He wished he could die and go to heaven, and not be exposed to the danger of falling into sin ; and forthwith, as he saw a grave which was prepared for a funeral, with its slab laid carelessly on top, he ran over, opened it, and threw himself in. The Saint was sent for again, and it was only after threats and repeated denunciations about the sinfulness of suicide that he frightened him out. He then retired, saying, “ Well, it has been a harder job to get you out of the grave than out of the hands of the devil.”

On various occasions he kept the rain away from multitudes who were assembled to hear him in the open air. This happened at Sutri and Santafiora, about the year 1751. The fields and streets were deluged with rain, and so were all who ran away for shelter,

whilst not a drop fell upon the Saint or those who had faith enough in his promise to stay and hear the sermon through. He once had to go across an arm of the sea to give a mission, and there was no vessel but a crazy old boat, which had been a long time out of use. He asked a few sailors to row him and his companions across in it ; they refused at first, but when they knew who it was who asked them, they took courage and manned the boat. They firmly believed that nothing could happen to them whilst in the company of the Saint ; and, besides, they wanted to go the very same way in which he was bound. The boat carried them all across safely ; but, as soon as they landed, down it went, and never carried a soul again.

Another time the Saint and his brother were given poison in their food by some wicked men whose conduct they denounced from the platform. That Lord who said of His chosen servants, " If they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them," protected them ; for in a few minutes after their meal they cast up the poisoned food, and went on with their work as if nothing had happened.

When the Saint was giving a mission in Monte Romano, he wanted to send a very important letter to Sutri, and engaged one Mattia Mairé to be the bearer thereof. Mattia heard that a river which crossed his road was swollen by the heavy rains, and feared to fulfil his engagement. The Saint said, " Go, I promise you the Divine protection—yes, I promise it to you ; and though the water should reach the tops of the trees, never mind, pass over and don't fear." Mattia set off, and his conduct gives us a beautiful evidence of

the conception in which F. Paul was held. Who would obey a missionary and venture his life if he did not believe that the elements themselves were obedient to him ! When he came to the river, he found a number of carriers detained on its higher bank, who, of course, tried to dissuade him from proceeding. Nothing daunted, Mattia drove the horse into the river, and the animal galloped over the waters, so that the carriers saw his shoes. They settled among themselves that it must have been the devil, and congratulated themselves on their narrow escape from some worse fate than that of being weather-bound.

CHAPTER XXXI

MORE OF HIS WORKS

ON the 7th of February, 1751, S. Paul founded the Retreat of S. Sosio. S. Sosio was a spot consecrated for a long time to the holy martyr, and is situated near Falvaterra, in the diocese of Veroli. The occasion of this foundation was a mission which the Passionists gave in Falvaterra. Nothing could satisfy the Bishop, then Mgr Targagni, until he possessed a community of these good men in his diocese. So enthusiastic was the Bishop and people about this project, that in a short time a house and church were built for the reception of the Fathers. The Saint came to inspect the building, and see if it were conformable to his rule. He found they had erected a magnificent entrance to the house; and notwithstanding that the building was far advanced, he made them pull down their piece of architecture and put a plain doorway in its stead. We may judge of the strength of the Order in numbers at this time, when we read that the Saint was able to send twelve religious the very first day to this new house.

In April, 1752, he opened the Retreat of the Seven Dolours in Terracina—the house which was erected on the ruins of Galba's palace,—and was able to start it with a good number in community. The Bishop who first sanctioned the Retreat had been a Carmelite, and very much attached he was to the Saint and his chil-

dren. He died before the building was fit for residence, and his successor, Mgr. Palombella, a Servite, was equally favourable. It was very pleasing to Paul to find these good religious kindly interested in him and his.

Missions were going on, and evidences of the Saint's great sanctity marking each, whilst negotiations were being transacted, and houses built and peopled. The incidents of those missions fill many pages in the processes; and as it is impossible to record them all, we must only select some of the more prominent.

In the September of 1750 he gave a mission in Canepina; and the people, who lived chiefly on chestnuts, came to the Saint with downcast looks, as they expected a year of famine from the withered appearance of chestnut-trees and the drought, which had parched up whatever kernels had made their appearance on the branches. The Saint compassionated them, and, after praying long and fervently in secret, he said from the platform, "Fear not, my dear people, recommend yourselves to God and trust in Him, for I hope the harvest of chestnuts will be abundant this year." After the mission copious rains fell, the trees flourished, and the prediction was more than verified. A similar blessing was consequent on a mission he gave in Vallerano. Here the chestnuts were worse than in Canepina; but the assurance of the servant of God was if anything even stronger.

He cured sick people, we can confidently say, by the dozen. He was in two places at once on more than one occasion. There was one peculiar feature in his miracles, that he never seems to have performed one unless some case of poverty or distress moved him to it. One time he would cure a poor man on whom a weak family

depended for support, another time a widow whose only daughter was exposed to danger in the event of her death. He did all things in the spirit of humility and poverty, and scarcely one of the wonders which we read of in his life was surrounded with any *éclat*. Witnesses there were in plenty, but nothing more.

If he was kind and gentle in invoking the power of God to aid those who needed it or persecuted him, he was sadly truthful in foretelling the punishments which were to fall upon those who prevented the work of God. In the unfortunate town of Pitigliano, where the Saint had recourse to the most terrible punishment which it is in the power of a priest, as such, to inflict ; namely, shaking the dust off his feet as a testimony against people, he foretold a curse which was to descend upon some troublesome neighbours. There was an apothecary living next door to the church, and he, with a chosen band of miscreants, were the terror of quiet neighbourhoods, and the patrons of vice as well as mischief. They laughed at the idea of a poor, half-starved monk coming to preach at them, and were determined to keep as many as they could away from the mission. When the spreading of bad reports, and the scoffing and ridicule which flowed from their polluted lips could not keep the crowds away, they had recourse to another expedient. The apothecary assembled six of his boon companions, and all seven, as soon as the sermon commenced, began sounding with hammers on a brass mortar or tin can, so that scarcely one could hear the words of the missionaries. The Saint sent word to them to stop until the sermon was over, but the apothecary sent word that he was in his own house, and could

do as he pleased. The Saint paused awhile, raised his eyes to heaven, and said to the people :—" Let those persons take care of themselves, for God will punish them." Next day one of them fell dead in the street, five others went to their account soon after, and the apothecary was reduced to beggary, left the town, and no one could tell what became of him. Not one of the rioters was exempt from the curse of heaven.

In a town in the Pontifical States there were seven persons of evil life, who would not come to the mission. The Saint warned them, but they laughed at him, as many who read these pages very likely would, and within a few months every one of them met with a sudden death. Two cases of sad notoriety happened in Montefiascone and a neighbouring town. There was a man in the former place whose profession required him to be a model of virtue, and whose evil life and profligacy caused deadly scandal. The Saint advised him, and sweetly invited him to reform his conduct. He promised to do all that was required, but was told that if he put his foot into a house of ill-fame he was in the habit of frequenting but only once more, he would never come out of it alive. He went there, notwithstanding the warning of the holy man, and in the very midst of his sin was struck dead by a stroke of apoplexy. The other case was somewhat similar ; but there were more hopes left for the salvation of the soul, because he bore testimony to the Saint's prophecy before he expired.

He was giving a mission in the diocese of Viterbo, and encountered one of those cases which priests know to be the most difficult to deal with in the whole range of sinful dispositions—an old woman who bore hatred

against her neighbour. He exhorted her, besought her, explained the nature of her sin, and smoothed the way to a reconciliation honourable and even flattering to her old hardened heart. It was no use, she would not forgive. The more he laboured to convert her, the more obstinate did she become. She felt it to be a part of the perfection of her hatred that even so great a saint as F. Paul could not move her to put it aside. At length, grieved in heart and deeply concerned for her unfortunate state, he threatened her by merely saying that God would punish her. In a few days after his departure she became suddenly ill, no priest could be found to attend her, and she was in a few minutes one of the most hideous and deformed corpses ever the neighbours laid eye upon. It was heaven to listen to the Saint and obey his voice; it was hell to refuse through contempt.

These sad examples are the more surprising when we consider the Saint's great love for sinners, and his zeal for their conversion. He possessed a clear insight into people's minds, and from his conduct one would suppose he had some vivid perception of the mystery of predestination. We find him converting some, and leaving others to their fate; although none does he give up until all his eloquence and prayers have failed. The wonderful thing is that some who were dreadful sinners he made saints, and others, who were not apparently half as wicked, he threatened with the judgment of God, which soon overtook them.

Here are a few instances. In Canino, in 1756, he heard of a man who lived in concubinage, and whom neither the threats and warnings of bishops and priests

nor the talking of neighbours could move one inch on the way of repentance. The Saint sent for him, embraced him, and kissed his forehead in the presence of a roomful of people, then spoke soothingly and encouragingly to him, and led him apart. So much did the sweetness of the holy man affect him that he gave up his evil course, removed the occasion of his sins, went to his confession and communion, and led a good life whilst he lived.

When he paid a visit to the retreat in Terracina, of which we have just recorded the foundation, he met a priest there of the diocese of Piperno, who suffered from leprosy. The priest was so bad that he could not walk to the Saint, but had to be helped to him by two men. He told the Saint how much he had suffered, and how inconvenient to himself and his flock was his constant infirmity. Our holy father put his hand upon the priest's breast, and next day he was perfectly cured.

One of our own fathers was troubled with a tumour, which needed the lancet, and which, even then, would remain doubtful as to its being ever healed. He was in S. Angelo of Vetralla, and S. Paul, who loved this retreat very much, was there on the eve of the operation. He went to see the sick father, made the sign of the cross over his sore, and when the surgeon came with his instruments next morning, he found that a better physician than he had been before him. The father was perfectly cured. Father John Mary of S. Ignatius, who was one of the famous twelve novices, and general after the death of the Saint, was cured of an infirmity in the eyes by the blessing of the Saint, and never suffered from the same again.

After the foundation of the house in Terracina he had occasion to write to the Bishop (he who was a Servite) on matters of business connected with the foundation. The Bishop was in receipt of a letter from the Saint one day, and had occasion also to go and visit a sick child, the daughter of a Signor Grattinara. The child was very ill indeed, and the parents were in great affliction about it, as it did not seem likely to recover. The Bishop felt an inspiration to apply the holy man's letter to the patient. He did so, and it was instantly cured. He wrote an account of it next day to the Saint himself.

In Arlena, near Montefiascone, a poor woman was very deaf, and wished to hear the mission sermons. She followed the Saint one night, applied his habit to her ear, and recovered her hearing perfectly. Another time, in Sutri, sometime about 1755, he cured a virulent cancer by making the sign of the cross upon it with the oil of the lamp before the Blessed Sacrament.

In a year of great scarcity of corn, shortly after 1750, the Saint was in Civita Castellana. A charitable lady, who every year supported many poor, told him she must omit her charity this year, because their granary was almost empty. Paul said, "Give the usual alms, and even more, and God will multiply your store." She obeyed him strictly. They had just thirty quarts of grain at the time of his visit. They used it themselves, and gave larger alms, and at the end of several months found exactly the same quantity of grain which they had in the beginning.

A similar miracle occurred in the convent of S. Lucia, in Corneto, in 1749.

CHAPTER XXXII

LOVE OF PURITY

CHASTITY was raised to the dignity of a great virtue by the Son of God, who chose a virgin for a mother, lived a virgin himself, and made virgins the objects of his predilection. Before the Christian era, chastity is said to have been preserved by Vestals and Sibyls, and great was the admiration of the heathen world thereat. It is a question whether their life was a voluntary choice, or whether they found themselves dropped into it by the simple force of circumstances. Chastity was not only placed before Christians in the Gospel as an excellent state, but prophecy, and the practice of the Apostles, as well as history, show us that the propagation of Christianity was due to the practice of chastity. All the Apostles were chaste, from the moment of their call at least. They went from place to place, unshackled by domestic ties, and instituted everywhere a celibate episcopate, and as far as was possible in those half-pagan times, a celibate priesthood. Had they to look to wives' paraphernalia, and provide for a family of children, the Gospel would never have lighted up the world with the enthusiasm and glowing spirit of self-sacrifice, which characterized the early Christians. The spirit of worldliness is almost inseparable from the domestic ties of family. An Apostle must leave all, or he is unfit for his vocation.

Why are the missions of Greeks and Anglicans cursed with barrenness, whilst Catholic missions flourish all over the world ? A great deal may be said for the purity and the prolific nature of faith ; but a secular historian invariably attributes it all to the single life of the one as contrasted with the double or decimal life of the other. It is also singular that heretics from the beginning have raged and foamed at chastity. There is not a heresiarch, from Vigilantius to Swedenborg, who has not given it an opprobrious epithet. The genius of heresy has always turned with sweet attraction to the pleasures of the flesh. The enmities between the virgin life and the married life in the ministry are but the fulfilment of the prophecy about the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

Catholics have ever loved chastity. It is the first love of the Church's children, and with many thousands of them it has been the last. The saints have been chaste without exception from the moment they turned completely to God, and even married saints have practised the virtue in an eminent degree. It has been the great mother of Christianity, barren according to the flesh, but fruitful according to the spirit.

Saints do not forget, nor indeed do any of those who bind themselves by vow to perpetual chastity, that they carry this treasure in vessels of clay. It is as difficult to preserve as it is noble in its aim and reward. When men and women retire into the desert or the cloister, where walls and doors keep their eyes from drinking in temptations, the observance of chastity is easy enough ; but when they have to mix with the world, as priests have to do, to probe the filthiest wounds and cure the

most polluted souls. When they have to strive against their natural tendencies, at the very moment that their duties oblige them to add fuel to concupiscence—when they have to lead the lives of angels in the lower grade of men, then does chastity become difficult, and then also does its perfect observance become heroic. The more pure a soul is, the farther does it keep from danger ; and the more unsullied its purity, the more does it dread the least approach to the opposite sin. Hence it is that in reading the lives of the saints, we come across many incidents which seem to us to partake of extreme caution ; nay, even to be stupid and unnecessary. It may be remarked that those who lead ordinary lives, and freely practise the liberties which society allows, are less keen in their perception of what is wrong than those whose purity has reached a high degree of refinement. In the latter it is like a mirror—the least breath brings a passing obscurity over it.

S. Paul of the Cross was once speaking about his youth, and regretting that he had been somewhat too frolicsome ; he added, “ but never—— ” and there he stopped. Indeed there is no doubt of his being always spotless in point of purity, for he was so with regard to every sort of grievous sin. The knowledge of this fact has come down in a very peculiar way. When the Saint was suffering from the acute pains of a long illness, F. Fulgentius overheard him one day communing thus with his God : “ Thou knowest, O Lord, that Thy Paul, through Thy grace, is not conscious of having ever stained his soul with wilful sin.”

His innocence was a motive to greater caution. When a soul had to be rescued from sin, he braved

all dangers ; but when there was not this necessity, he was brave in flight from occasions. His maxims on the point of treating with the opposite sex deserve attention. " As long as our bones are covered with this skin, there is reason to be afraid. Many persons, advanced in years, and who, for their merits, might be called pillars of the Church, have fallen into sin for want of caution : shall we then trust in ourselves ? Charity for all, but intimacy for none."

When in the retreat, if he heard that there was chance of meeting a woman on his walk through the fields, he would deny himself this recreation for that day. He never liked ladies coming to our houses, even though they might be benefactors ; and when he was called to the parlour, he went like a criminal going to execution. He despatched the matter of his visit in a few words, and these were according to the old ascetic rule, which he ever inculcated by word and example : *Cum mulieribus sermo brevis et durus*. Those who saw him receiving the visits of ladies used to say that his deportment was a sermon.

The older he grew, the more careful he became. He used to say in his old age, " I am more afraid with regard to purity now than when I was young." A lady asked him one day to bear her always in mind in his prayers. " Oh, no ! " he said, " I shall recommend you to Our Lord, and then take very good care to forget you." His conversation with people was not of the dull and lethargic sort which is always sermonizing. He was cheerful and pleasant in conversation, but managed to make whatever he said convey a useful lesson to those with whom he conversed. In recreation with

the religious there was the same cheerfulness, and if he heard an immoderate burst of laughter he looked displeased, and gave a rebuke. His principle was that the laugh of a religious should not go far beyond a smile, and that it ought not to be heard.

He had an instinctive perception of the sin of impurity in others—they smelt offensively to him ; whereas he could tell those who preserved the lily of chastity intact with equal inerrancy. For six months after he occupied a room, did it emit a fragrant odour, the nature of which no one was acquainted with. The same was remarked of articles which touched him. This index of purity is very old in hagiology, and from the number of witnesses, in every age of the Church, who bear testimony to its existence, we must consider it as the ordinary reward of great purity.

One time a young man came to the Saint and begged to be admitted into the Order. He took his hands, and pressed them, saying, “ You know how much you have offended God with these hands, and still you would wish to say mass with them ! ” That was enough. The young man betook himself to another line of life. The invocation of the Saint’s name saved young women in danger of losing their treasure ; and many interpositions of Providence proved the misfortune of rejecting any advice which the Saint offered on the point of chastity.

Beautiful and practical were the rules he laid down for the custody of this virtue. His advices to priests and religious were, *Sermo brevis et durus*—Let your conversation with ladies be brief and stiff.

On his missions he preached with great force and

caution upon impurity. He gave practical lectures for bringing up youth, and his chief object was to have a love and admiration for chastity imprinted on their minds whilst they were still tender and capable of receiving good impressions. He strove to abolish the baneful practice of company-keeping, inveighed against the evil of the scandalous tongues of older people, who, by obscene language or impure jokes, kill daily innumerable souls. He would have the young men form themselves into guilds or little societies, like that of which he himself was a member in Castellazzo. His advice for young girls was, "Let them be shown, like jewels, rarely, to special people, and well watched all the time."

He had special rules for all sorts of people upon this point, and his own example lent authority to his words. If a word was let fall in his presence which touched even by insinuation upon indecency, neither rank nor office saved the speaker from a severe rebuke. He one time sent a prince away with a great scolding because he spoke somewhat in earnest about priests mixing more with society, and not running away from ladies as if they were wild beasts. One fruit was seen everywhere the Saint had been, that his penitents could be distinguished from their companions by their modesty in dress and deportment. He performed miracles more than once to save female modesty from the surgeon's knife, and many were deprived of his friendship because they did not come up to his standard of decorum.

CHAPTER XXXIII

CLEMENT XIII

IN the year 1758, Christendom had to lament the death of its great Pontiff, Benedict XIV. The Passionists lost in him a father and protector ; but their loss could be easily supplied, whereas the more universal loss could not. The Chair of Peter was vacant on the 3rd May, and on the 6th of the July following the Saint's greatest friend, Cardinal Rezzonico, was elected to fill it, under the name of Clement XIII. He found the Church surrounded by dangers. Voltaire and D'Alambert were sowing the seeds of the Revolution in France. Joseph II. was planning his Erastian changes in the Church of Austria. The Society of Jesus, who had from their foundation fought for the Holy See, and who, from some inscrutable cause, had come to be regarded with jealousy and hatred by almost every European power, was on trial for bare existence. In the year 1759, the Marquis of Pombal had the Jesuits expelled from Portugal, and sent them off to beg or starve on the coast of Italy. Spain followed the example of the sister kingdom, and a cabal of infidel and Jansenist politicians, with the Duke of Choiseul at their head, passed a law in France declaring them to be impious, sacreligious, and derogatory to the Divine Majesty. Their colleges were closed, their noviciates destroyed, their goods confiscated, and an attempt made

at annulling their vows. This happened in 1762, but it was darkening the horizon of history for several years before. Naples was not behindhand in the march of destruction. The exiled fathers found in Clement a generous protector, not only when they were cast friendless and penniless upon the shores of the Ecclesiastical States, but even when danger was threatening them. Clement was called upon to suppress the Society, and he answered by a brief of confirmation, which act was in accordance with the wishes of the Catholic hierarchy.

Blow followed upon blow ; Avignon in France, and Benevento in Naples, were taken from the Pope. Venice, Genoa, Bavaria, Hungary, took up the spirit of vexation ; so that poor Clement found, like many of his predecessors, that the triple crown had many thorns. He was an intrepid champion of the Church's rights, and no amount of intimidation could make him abate one jot or tittle of what he knew to be his duty. These things are all matter of history, and therefore may be left to their proper place in the annals of the Church. It is an interesting pursuit to try and find out the minor things which occupy the attention of popes and monarchs. History gives us little besides their public deeds, those great movements which affect nations for better or for worse ; but our natural curiosity, and the special gratification which it finds in the smaller corners of palaces, prompts us to dig out things which are not often known, and make a book about them. The events which are recorded in this chapter do not come up to the epic, for the very reason that they come to nought ; nor do they seem beneath notice, from the

fact that they occupied the minds of many learned men occasionally during four or five years.

The first event which befits this history is that, upon a certain day, not long after the coronation of the new Pope, Fathers Paul and John Baptist repaired once more to the Eternal City. They wished to offer their respect and congratulations to their old and constant friend—they knew that access to the Vatican was easier to them now than ever—and they had several things to negotiate regarding the stability of the new Order. In none of their hopes were they disappointed. The Pope received them not only courteously, but with an affection tinged with the reverence he had conceived for their great holiness. The poor humble priest who forty years before was chased from the Pope's antechamber as a vagabond, was now admitted into the sanctum itself, and was thought worthy of being consulted by the head of the Church on matters of the greatest importance. The change came about without a spark of ambition to set his actions in a blaze, and without a single effort at seeking patronage from the great. His humility and love of solitude struck a far-seeing Cardinal with surprise. He learnt the depths of his sanctity in the buffets and trials he saw him contend against with the simple power of the cross and silence. God ordained that this friend should become Pope, and that he should not forget his protégé in his elevation. It is thus that sanctity ever succeeds in being known. It tries to hide itself under a bushel, and the very efforts which it makes to do so place it upon a candlestick. Adversity begins the career of saints, and most generally accompanies them to its

close. We find them nearly always suffering ; but we forget that in their subsequent glory.

The Saint was overjoyed with his reception, and found himself fully encouraged to apply for those favours which chiefly brought him to Rome. He came to try and have his Institute raised to a regular Order with solemn vows, and also to found a house in Rome itself.

It was understood formerly that no body of men or women could claim the rights of religious without solemn vows ; but Gregory XIII., in his bull *Ascendente Domino*—confirming the Society of Jesus in 1584—decreed that the profession of simple vows in a congregation approved of by the Holy See was quite sufficient. Since the Council of Trent, solemn vows have come into disfavour. When the subject of solemn vows was proposed to Pope Clement XIII., he received it favourably, and, as usual, deputed a congregation of five cardinals to examine into the matter. They held many conferences, and the Saint had to make journeys to Rome, and write letters of explanation enough to tire the patience of anyone but himself. He did not see his way clearly ; he ordered prayers and sacrifices to be offered, and wrote to the more ancient of the fathers for their counsel. At length he began to perceive that nothing would come of this project, and said as much to a friend. He grew indifferent as to the issue then, and waited calmly for the opinion of their Eminences the examiners. They wisely decided that, seeing the Rules were so strict, it was probably many young men would break down in their observance, and that it was better to leave the door open for their return to the world. There was nothing said about solemn vows

ever after ; and the decision made the Saint himself see that it was wiser the Order should continue as it was. His last solemn advice on the subject was, " Take care of the corn, and throw away the tares."

The refusal to allow the new congregation solemn vows was given in 1760, and in the following year we find the Saint opening another house on Monte Argentaro for the noviciate. This house was eight years in building, and is situated on a more healthy and convenient part of the mountain than the Retreat of the Presentation.

In a year or two after, when he was in his seventieth year, he found his health completely broken, and the weight of his office, with the visiting of the houses, more than sufficient to exhaust the little strength he had left. Hence, in obedience to the advice of his religious, he gave up giving missions, and he writes thus to a friend about it : " I have done with missions, and all other labours for my neighbours ; for I am no longer able to continue them. If I were, I would wish to be still in the field, for the wants of the world are very great indeed." Yes, well might he rest, at the age of seventy, from the harassing work in which he spent the forty best years of his life.

CHAPTER XXXIV

FATHER JOHN BAPTIST

THERE is hardly an instance in secular or ecclesiastical history of such a friendship as existed between S. Paul of the Cross and his brother, Father John Baptist of S. Michael. By nature they were somewhat unlike in their dispositions. Paul was lively, warm, enthusiastic; John Baptist was sedate, cold, and calculating. Paul was absorbed completely in the work of God, and stood forward to show it; John Baptist was equally full of piety, but he preferred coming to the fore as his brother's shadow. Paul started a severe course of life; but John Baptist would not remain in an easy one behind him. If Paul went to the barn to mortify himself, John Baptist was sure to accompany him. In childhood they both went in for heroic sanctity; and step by step did they advance together until the death of one sent him to his reward ten years before the other.

The Saint's character we have endeavoured to portray in many chapters of this book. We must devote this one, at least, to that of his brother.

Father John Baptist was but once separated from Paul, and then he wistfully said, "You will not feel happy without me." So it proved, for until he was clothed in the same habit and went through the self-same practices of prayer and mortification, Paul seemed

at cross purposes with his destiny. When they were both together, and supplemented each other's defects, everything went well, and heaven smiled upon their efforts, even through the clouds which overhung them. In every move of their life F. John Baptist had his place; he was sufficiently forward not to be counted as second, and kept far enough behind not to be called the first. He knew his brother's worth as none in this world ever knew it, and he took good care that envy or any other passion did not prevent him from letting it be known to the world as well as to himself.

In looking at both, one is almost tempted to divide his estimation for the brothers equally; and even when we follow reason, and pay due homage to the Saint, we wish for the opportunity of doing the same for his excellent companion. Father John was always inclined for retirement—only duty could drag him out of it; but he was as much at home among men as he was in his cell. Paul valued him highly; the most important offices were assigned to him, and in missionary work it was always his duty to lecture the clergy. His pictures represent him as a very handsome man, with a ray of sadness subduing his beautiful countenance, and giving him more the appearance of an angel in the flesh than of a man pure and simple. One gets the idea, by looking upon it, that, totally unconscious of your presence, he is engrossed with things of heaven, and finds enjoyment in them of a kind that makes earthly joys painful. Saint Paul seems always anxious for his neighbour's salvation; an interest in others would seem to cost his brother an effort. Father John was a man of few words, of much thought, whom you

could love and reverence, but dare not let him know you did, lest he should rebuke you and lecture you on detachment. Yet did you need advice in difficult crises, or strength under temptation, you would run to him and pour out your very soul before him with satisfaction and pleasure. The Saint was a perfect founder, and his brother was the most perfect specimen of what a member of an already founded Order ought to be. He was detached, indefatigable, zealous, obedient, conscientious, and more inclined towards severity than gentleness.

He seems, through the course of a long life (he lived to the age of 70) never to have needed reproof; his observance of rule was exactness itself; and if he committed a fault, it was that of leaning too much to virtue's side.

Since they first wore the purple stole, each was the other's confessor. Paul told all his secrets to Father John, and if the latter had any beside his brother's, they were shared with him in like manner. Both knew each other thoroughly, and in their long intercourse, in the same house, in the same pursuits, in the same recreations, in the same devotions, there is no evidence of their ever having had a single word of disagreement. They mortified and corrected each other in turns, but they felt they were then conferring favours for which they ought to be thanked. It is singular, however, in the processes, that we have many instances of the corrections F. John Baptist administered to the Saint, but not one of those which were given to himself.

We should say, at first sight, that Father John was rather hard on the Saint, if we did not remember that

he was a Saint, and had to be treated accordingly. We can understand everything with this supposition, and should fall into serious mistakes without it.

There was great wisdom in the Saint's selecting him for confessor, as any of the other priests who were attracted to the life by his sanctity would have too much reverence for him to subject him to anything like a mortification. Father John knew him from childhood ; and a brother's love, purified by holiness, could dare to venture where angels might fear to tread. Besides, the elder brother was always a Superior, and only the younger could outstep what seemed to be his place, and make him practise obedience when circumstances over which neither had control forbade it.

As has been remarked, the Saint was open and communicative with his children ; his brother was singularly reserved. The *amo nesciri* in the one was, fortunately for us, often exchanged for a higher principle ; the other not only kept to it literally himself, for which we are very sorry, but rebuked others for forgetting or exchanging it. When the Saint would tell, even in the third person, of the difficulties undergone in carrying out the divine commission, or the interior consolations which accompanied them, his brother would instantly correct him with a " Yes, that's the way to practise humility : you might as well put your finger on that certain person ; we all know whom you mean." Or if the Saint, as was his rule, came out clearly, and told them some of the good things he had done, F. John would quietly remark, " Not he who commendeth himself is approved ; " and his brother at once changed the conversation.

These lectures from Father John were not given sparingly, nor stintedly. They were once giving a mission together, and F. John corrected the Saint about something at dinner ; Paul turned to another father, and said, with a smile, " This is the sixth sermon to-day." " Yes," answered his brother, " that is a capital idea—turn your corrections into a joke, and we shall get on." This addition was not quite unexpected ; for Father John's rebukes were not formalities—they were real, and went as far as he intended them to go.

The Saint would go nowhere without his brother's permission, even when he was Superior. He wrote once to somebody who wanted to see him, " This morning, as it is the day, I will ask F. John Baptist to let me go to Orbetello ; if he prevents me, I shall try to-morrow ; and if he refuses me then—well, we must have patience." If this affectionate brother saw the holy man eat with an evident relish—and it was seldom he had any appetite in his latter days—he would take the plate away from him, and tell him that he ought to mortify himself. The Saint would say when the religious thought him ill because his supper came from the refectory untasted, " Father John Baptist won't let me eat : we must have patience." On the most innocent indulgence of any natural inclination, he was sure to be crossed by his dear brother.

If Father John happened to get up earlier than his brother—who was generally praying before any one was up, unless his infirmities prevented sleep until near the break of day—he would go into his room, open the shutters, and scold him out of bed with, " Yes ; sleep away ! death will come and find you sleeping." Or

sometimes, "What a sluggard of a founder we are blessed with! surely this is a fine example of fervour to the community!"

We have a single instance on record of a different phase of the relation between the two brothers. Father John Baptist, to the surprise of everybody, did for once in his life praise his brother in his presence. Either the Saint himself, or some of the religious, spoke at recreation about some great thing he had done, and Paul with simplicity explained the matter, and thereby testified to its truth. The brother was rejoiced at it, and said, "Oh, it is no wonder that *you* should do such things." The Saint became grave at once, a cloud overcast his countenance, he burst into tears, and said, "This is the way to send me to hell and cast me under the feet of the devils." He then rebuked Father John, put him in penance, and forbade him to appear in his presence, or to come near his room. He went and locked himself in to do penance for himself for three days. On the third day Father John saw his brother's door a little ajar; he pushed it open, and knelt quietly on the threshold, saying: "Are you yet pacified? I am come to ask your pardon"; and then crawled on his knees to the middle of the room. The Saint's heart was touched—affection came uppermost; he embraced him with tenderness, and all was forgiven and forgotten.

From this we may conclude what pleased our Saint most, and how well Father John Baptist knew how to treat him according to his wishes. It is really refreshing to contemplate such affection—natural, overflowing with tenderness, and helping to heaven.

The time was at length come when the two holy

brothers were to be separated. They had made saints of each other during a long and intimate association of seventy years. Father John Baptist was ripe for heaven ; but his brother had to remain on earth a few years longer to perfect the work of his Institute. Towards the end of June, F. John was taken ill, and daily showed symptoms of approaching nearer to the end of his earthly career. Father Paul was night and day in the sick-room, and nursed his beloved brother with all the spiritual and temporal consolations in his power. Oh, what a death-bed ! one whom we may venture to call a saint, assisted by another and a brother's warmest love, and a friendship cemented by long years of companionship and toil—casting a hue of maternal tenderness over every little action which smoothed the pillow for his body, or pacified the conscience for his departing spirit ! The community were assembled in the sick priest's cell, and again and again did they go through the prayers for the dying, mingled with their sighs for the coming loss of a beloved superior, and their tears evoked by the scene before them. The *Salve regina* was intoned by them when manifest signs of approaching death were seen ; then the Saint commenced in a firm voice the *Recommendation for a departing Soul*, and the body of the religious gave the responses. They ceased not to pray, and call upon the angels to come and assist this precious soul to his final resting-place, until amid their fervent petitions he breathed forth his spirit, and his pure soul went to the reward it had so long worked hard to earn, on the 30th of August, 1765, in the seventieth year of his mortal pilgrimage. This happened in the retreat of S. Angelo.

It is not easy to estimate the extent of the blank which Father John Baptist's death caused in the Congregation, and in the heart of his brother. The Saint gave full vent to his grief. He had lost his other self—he had lost one who always had a word of encouragement for him in his day of trial—he had lost a brother in every sense of the word, and that is enough to cause grief in the most holy and sensitive soul. Paul's grief took the form of petrification: he was silent; he was wrapped up; he prayed much, sighed little, and spoke but two words, *obmutui et humiliatus sum*, until he had sung the *Requiescat* over his brother's grave. When the obsequies were over, and he had to look about for one to take the place of the departed, he realized his loneliness, as it were, in the world. This, however, was soon done, and Father John Mary, of S. Ignatius, took his place as confessor to the holy founder. When all the affairs were adjusted, the Saint sat down and gave utterance to the following lamentation: "My brother is gone!—who will mortify me? who will correct my faults now? My brother is gone, and who will supply his place?"

When Father John Mary asked him how he felt with regard to his brother's death, he said, "Certain it is that I feel grieved to the quick; but if our Lord should say unto me, 'Will you have your brother brought to life again? I will do so if you like, but I prefer he should be dead,' I would answer at once, 'I will choose nothing, O Lord, but what pleases Thee; and therefore I, too, prefer he should be dead.'"

Father John Baptist was highly esteemed as well as loved by his brother, who wrote his character in these

words : “ He is one who has the spirit of God ; and so constant and assiduous in prayer, that he has not an equal in the Congregation.”

The last advice of F. John to his brother was : “ Be slow ; be slow to accept subjects ; be slow in having those you accept ordained : by this course the flock will be small—but never mind, it will be also select.”

CHAPTER XXXV

LAST VISITATION OF THE CAMPAGNA RETREATS

AFTER the death of his brother, the Saint foresaw that his many infirmities would soon send him to be his companion in bliss. He remained in the Retreat of S. Angelo from August, 1765, until November, 1766, with the exception of a visit to Rome, and then carried out a resolve which he wrote to one of our fathers: "Now that my life is well-nigh spent, and I see myself upon the verge of the grave, I have resolved *in Domino*, to come and say my last farewells, and give my parting embraces to my dearest brethren in the different retreats.

In the spring of 1766 he went to Rome to see about a promise which the Pope made of giving him a house in that city. A house and garden, on the road to S. John Lateran, was purchased for him, and in the year following it was colonized by a few Passionists. We cannot say whether it was during this visit or in passing through Rome to Monte Cavi in November that the Saint made an important acquaintance. There was in Rome, at this time, a celebrated Franciscan, named Lorenzo Ganganelli, who had been favourably noticed by Benedict XIV., and lately raised to the Cardinalate by Clement XIII. He had but just put on his scarlet robes when our Saint had his first audience of him, and his exclamation on leaving his presence was, "Oh! this man would be a pope indeed!" and on arriving at the

house of Signor Angeletti, where he lodged during his stay, he said, "Ganganelli does not stop; he will go forward, *ascendet superius*." He also added that he would befriend himself and his Order.

The progress of the venerable old priest, bent down by the weight of seventy-two winters, and the weakness and infirmities which his mortified life brought on, was a regular triumphal procession. The fame of his sanctity and miracles had gone over the Peninsula, and when he appeared in a town the populace went in crowds to get his blessing, kiss his hand or his habit, get their infirm cured, or cut pieces off his cloak to preserve as relics. He was very much confused at these marks of respect and veneration—sometimes he would make acts of contrition, and compare the short-sightedness of men with the all-seeing eye of God, which he thought saw into the deformity and vileness of his conscience. But more frequently he turned it all off by a pleasantry, as, when a devout and pushing woman cut a big piece off his cloak one day before he perceived it, and as she was running off in high glee, cherishing her acquired treasure, he shouted after her: "That's right, the piece of cloth you stole from me will make capital stockings for your poultry, I don't know what else it can be good for." The devotion of the good people went so far that he had barely a few shreds of his habit and mantle left when he came to Terracina, and was obliged to get new ones. Terracina is situated at the extreme end of the Campagna, bordering on the kingdom of Naples, and the retreat near that town was the most distant of the five which then composed that province. The Saint visited this house after Monte Cavi, but was prevented com-

pleting his tour as soon as he intended by a severe illness which kept him in Terracina until the winter was over.

When he set out, in March, 1767, for S. Sosio, his journey was more of an ovation than that which brought him down in November. Such was the throng of people who gathered around him in Ceprano and Frosinone—also border towns of the Papal States, north-east from Terracina—that the military had to be called out to keep them in order. Bishops and priests were not behind the populace in demonstrating their reverence. The Bishops of Ferentino and Anagni escorted him through the latter town, and the Saint said to F. John Mary : “ I never felt such shame and confusion in my whole life.” The poor young man who passed through Italy amid scoffs in 1726, passed the same way in 1766 amid acclamations. What did all this ? His humility and mortification, coupled with the faith of a people who could understand sanctity when it was presented to them. Even nuns, such of them as were not inclosed, stole in at the back door of where the Saint stayed, in order not to be noticed as guilty of too much holy curiosity, and at the same time, to have the pleasure of getting his advice and blessing.

When he was approaching the retreat at Terracina, he was scarcely able to walk, and had to be supported, partly by a sort of crutch, and partly by the arm of a fellow religious. He was also somewhat deaf, but not so much as to be unable to catch a confused sound of the ringing of bells. It was the custom with the religious to ring their bells when the Provincial or General, in making his visitation, comes within hail of the monastery, and it was their joy-bells which were going at the

time. He asked what it was, and was told that they were welcoming his coming, and to inaugurate the visit as became them. He exclaimed, "Why do you ring? Why do you ring? Ring for the dead, for I have never done any good." And then to the surprise of all, he acquired strength, walked off briskly before his companions, beating his breast and reciting the *Miserere* psalm until he came to the church. Any extraordinary mark of respect put him into a state of religious excitement, and when his children understood how painful it was, they desisted, content with the simple reverence due to an ordinary superior. When the feast of S. Anthony came round, which is celebrated in many parts of Italy by the blessing of mules and donkeys, the Saint came to the rector's room and asked him if he had yet blessed the beasts; the rector said, no; but that he would soon perform the ceremony. "Well, then," said the good father, half in joke and half in earnest, "let me know when it is about to commence, for I have ordered Brother Bartholomew to decorate me with ribbons, in order that I may be blessed with them."

A rather odd trial to his humility happened in Ronciglione: he was taking his collation one morning, and several secular gentlemen and a priest were at table with him. They were pestered with flies, and during the meal several of them were wearied and losing patience in trying to chase away their troublesome visitors. The Saint perceived it, and said in a sportive way, "Now, if I were not such a sinner as I am, and had any sort of holiness, I could drive away those flies. I knew a holy man who, by doing this," and he made the sign of the cross, "made all the flies around him disappear."

Scarcely had he finished the words, when the room was cleared of these insects. All were astonished, and none seemed more so than himself. He was so confounded at this display of his virtue that he spoke not a single word that whole morning, but went to hide his confusion in some corner or other.

There was a little girl, named Gertrude Ruggieri, of about ten or eleven years of age, who was troubled for more than a year with a virulent sore in her right arm. She saw the crowds gathering round the Saint as he passed through their town, and thought it was a good opportunity to get herself cured. Everybody was kissing his hand, and she was not strong enough to push her way up to him. By a great deal of ado and following him until the crowd became less, she came near enough to be able to kiss his mantle; but in the act of kissing it she bit a piece of it off, and ran home to her mother in great glee to get the relic she had piously stolen applied to her arm. The bit of cloth was kept bound to the hand, and after two days she felt a great pain; she began to cry, then, and thought it was getting worse in punishment of her boldness; but when the mother unbound it, she found the swelling gone, the wound healed up, and the arm as free and easy as if nothing had ever been the matter with it. "You see, child," said the mother, "Father Paul has cured you; now, you must say a Pater and Ave every day in thanksgiving for this grace." The child cheerfully undertook to say the prayers, and if she ever chanced to miss them the arm began to pain her, until she was obliged to get out of bed to fulfil her promise.

His stay in Terracina was signalized by many other

wonders, one or two of which we shall relate. There was a lady, named Teresa Spagnuoli, who suffered very much from a tumour in the left breast, for which she was obliged to undergo an operation in Rome. Scarcely had she returned home when a similar one broke out on the right. She was almost inconsolable, and feared to tell her husband about it. At length, by the advice of her confessor, she did tell him, and it occurred to him that they had better go to Father Paul, for he had heard a great deal about the cures he had wrought. They came to the retreat, the Saint blessed her, and charged her to say nothing about it; and, when she returned home, not only was the new tumour gone, but the wound left by the operation disappeared also.

One, Giuseppe Maceroni, was given up by the doctors, and his mother went to the Saint in great distress to beg of him to intercede for his recovery. He prayed a little while, and then told her, in the presence of one of the fathers, that her son would not die, and gave her some water, which he blessed, for him to drink. The prediction was verified, and the sick man was able to come to the retreat, and thank God and his servant for his recovery, in a day or two.

When the Saint left Terracina, he went to S. Sosio, near Falvaterra. His route was marked by the homage of crowds, and numbers of cures which he wrought by his blessings. It is almost impossible to record them all, for information could not be gathered among simple villagers, and biographers give us only such as are to be found in the processes; and these were told by witnesses who could be procured without much trouble.

Several miracles attested the Saint's presence in

S. Sosio, but there was none which produced a more wonderful effect than that of giving health and vigour to one who was on the brink of the grave, and had already received the Viaticum. F. Paul was appealed to, and the medical man carried the request to the retreat, saying that science and art and nature had no remedy, and that heaven alone could stay the stroke of death. He received a bottle of blessed water from the Saint, and went and gave the sick man about a spoonful of it. So speedy was the recovery, that the doctor was out of himself with joy, and protested he would use no remedy for the future but the miraculous water. We have no record of his success with this substitute for his drugs and prescriptions.

His next visit was paid to the Retreat at Ceccano. Here also his gift of working miracles was manifested in the cure of a poor woman who had been years a cripple, and whose infirmity baffled the skill of the physicians.

This tour concluded in Paliano. The Saint gave his religious to understand that it would be his last visit ; and the event verified his foresight. He passed through Rome in the summer of 1767, and found there a young priest, named Vincenzo Maria Strambi, who wished to join the children of the Passion. The Saint admitted him, and he proved afterwards a great ornament to the Order. He possessed virtues very much akin to those of Father John Baptist ; he was a very learned man, and, after fulfilling various important offices amongst us, was made Bishop of Macerato and Tolentino in July, 1801. He died in the odour of sanctity in 1824, and was declared Venerable by Gregory XVI., in 1843. The

cause of his beatification is in a favourable state at present.

It was in 1767 also that our fathers opened the house in Rome which was given them by the Pope in the preceding year. It was called the Hospice of the Holy Cross. During the stay of the Saint in Rome, he went to see his newly-made friend, Cardinal Ganganelli, and foretold him his future destiny. His Eminence smiled, and said,—“ Father Paul, we would have matters arranged according to our liking, perhaps.” When he came to return the visit in the hospice, he said,—“ Father Paul, I should like to do something for your Order.” The Saint’s countenance lit up as he rejoined,—“ The time will come when your Eminence will have it in your power to do us some good ; aye, and much, much, much.” When the Cardinal took his leave the holy man said to a Signor Frattini, who came to see him,—“ Frattini, there is the successor of the present Pope, and you will see that shortly.”

The Saint then went to his beloved S. Angelo, and was taken so ill that he received the Viaticum three times.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SPIRIT OF POVERTY

THE foundation of religious virtue is poverty. Our Lord began His sermon on the mount with—"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Poverty, however, is a virtue which it is easier to preach than to practise. It is all very well to hold up detachment from earthly things, and discourse eloquently on the dangers of riches; but to find a man who can refuse a gift, or fail to provide against possible need, if he can, is very rare indeed. The poverty of religious is rather peculiar. It is nothing like absolute want, or a state of existence always on the verge of starvation. When a man makes his vows, he is absolutely certain of never going to bed supperless except in penance, and though personally he owns nothing he is very well aware that his Order will always provide not only what is necessary, but what is decent according to its rule. Poverty as a virtue does not consist so much in want, as in the love of wanting something; that is to say, poverty of spirit. There are ample opportunities for indulging a propensity to need in the best provided community, and saints have always availed themselves of them.

S. Paul of the Cross, without going about in an ecstatic wooing of poverty, like his great predecessor S. Francis of Assisi, kept himself all his life long in a state of need.

Spare clothing, or rather covering, food scarcely sufficient to support life, and hardships which are known only to Heaven, paved his way to the founding of the Order, and accompanied him, until, in the twentieth year of this poor life, a command from the Supreme Pontiff obliged him to put a scant covering on his head and feet, and indulge himself in the luxury of a short cloak in winter time. He says in his rule that poverty is the standard under which his congregation fights. He would never allow the least relaxation on this point, and it was his decided conviction that if the pure mendicancy of the Order was altered it would soon be ruined altogether. The Cardinals who were appointed to revise the rules, suggested, at one time, the propriety of allowing some fixed revenues for the hours of study, and at other times for the infirmary. On no account would he ever accept any sort of stable income, no matter what plea might be put forward to justify such a change in our constitutions. The worst room in the house was always his, and the worst habit and the worst everything was supposed to belong to him by right.

He was altogether indifferent to money matters ; he would not even handle money if he could help it, and in his visitation of the retreats, when the canon law obliged him to look after the income and expenses he generally got another father to count what remained in the rector's coffers. So strict was the first rule that none of our houses could keep any large sum ; and if they received a gift which went beyond the current expenses they were obliged to put it in the hands of the ecclesiastic syndic, and when it was wanted for building or any other pur-

poses to go and ask it of him as an alms. This rule was palpably subject to many inconveniences, and had to be changed by apostolic authority.

He would never wear a new habit ; but when his own became too ragged or too much pieced, he begged the left-off habit of a lay brother, and wore it out. Once he was put in singular straits. Cardinal Colonna came to visit him in the hospice of S. Crocifisso, in Rome. He found the Saint laid up with an illness in a narrow cell which scarcely held his wretched bed, two straw-bottomed chairs, and an unvarnished deal table. He was struck by the poverty of the cell, and especially by the wretched coverlet which was on the bed. Next day a parcel arrived from the Cardinal, containing a neat white counterpane for the poor invalid. It was just what anybody would think was required ; because many great personages came to visit him, and they might not have such a love for poverty as not to be rather pleased that some little show of decency should be made on account of their presence. The counterpane was put by in a cupboard, and when the Cardinal announced another visit, the lay brother who attended the sick man, went to him to argue the cause of its admission to the cell. He put before the Saint its simplicity and neatness, and the offence the Cardinal might take at seeing his present slighted. He consented ; but as soon as the Cardinal was gone he called the brother, told him he felt like a thief caught in the act during the interview, and ordered the counterpane out of the house. It was exchanged for a rude rug, after the Saint's own heart, and they never attempted to introduce a bit of finery into his cell again.

The brother carpenter was ordered to make a sort of

desk to hold papers of importance in the father's cell, but because he had put a little bit of ornament on it, it could never gain admission into it, but had to rest in some other part of the house. If he perceived, in his visits, the least violation of poverty—no matter though a Provincial might be the delinquent—he unhesitatingly condemned it, and lectured against it. He used to say : “ If our brethren keep up the spirit of poverty, the congregation will always maintain its vigour. I shall always say so. If I were at the point of death, I should leave three counsels behind me ; viz., If the spirit of prayer, the spirit of solitude, and the spirit of poverty are preserved, the congregation will shine before God and men.”

Anything like dandyism, or even an approach to respectability of appearance in poor religious, was positively shocking to him. A rector got a piece of cloth made for habits, and it was rather of a finer texture than that commonly used. The Saint saw it, and said, “ What ? are we going to turn ourselves out as gents ? ” The cloth was condemned at once, and he preferred the spirit of poverty to the loss which might be incurred by putting it aside.

Although thus severe towards the admission of possible abuses, he was careful that the religious should have everything which the rule allowed. A fervent rector used to ring the bell for prime a little before the time, and the Saint forbade him to do it any more. If any religious liked to spend part of the time of sleep in prayer, he might do so, with permission ; but no superior had a right to require anything beyond the letter of the rule. He saw after everything, and took care that nothing should be wasted ; and if he found the religious careless

with regard to things under their charge, he never failed to rebuke them. He had so many powerful and rich friends who would joyfully give them their all, had he asked it ; but he never made use of the advantage thus offered, and he preferred that a community should feel the effects of poverty than that he should do anything which he judged contrary to its spirit.

Several Popes pressed him to ask something for himself or his Order, and felt rather hurt at his not venturing to evoke their generosity—but he never would, and when pressed to ask something he was contented with requesting some spiritual privilege, such as leave to say Mass an hour before the canonical time when engaged on missions.

Once he was accompanied to the Vatican by the rector of the Roman house. This good father had a great deal of trouble in trying to make ends meet, as is always the case in new foundations, and knowing the feelings of the Pope towards the holy founder, he pressed him hard on the way to beg something from the Holy Father. The Saint nodded an apparent assent. When the rector saw that the interview was coming to an end and no mention made of his request, he tried to remind Paul of his promise in the best way he could without attracting attention. He was at length relieved from his anxiety when he heard the Pope say,—“ Are you in want of anything, Father Paul ? ” Here the rector was radiant with hope, but his countenance fell when he heard the Saint’s reply : “ We are only too well off.” On their return Father Rector remonstrated with him upon his negligence of their interests, and added plenty about the difficulties a rector had to contend with, etc., etc. ; but he could

only get for reply : "What we have is enough—we are poor."

Even in his illness he would have no delicacy, and if anything was sent him by a friend he told the lay brother to give it to the religious. "Spend nothing for me, or at least but very little ;—we are poor, and must live like poor people," were the words which came from the sick-bed of the Saint. To the very last moment of his life he was poor. In fact, the long and the short of it is, he loved nothing in this world, cared for nothing but heaven and what would bring him there, and he never was a thief, by deceiving or loving anything but his God. We might pile instances upon instances from the immense volumes of the processes to illustrate his spirit of poverty, but it is needless ; we feel, whilst doing the little we have done to illustrate it, as if gilding gold. No man can read the shortest history of his life without perceiving that he was a man, wholly absorbed in God, who preached by his example every virtue in the heroic degree which can ornament a Christian soul. His life is an illustration of the perfect manner in which a mere man can, by grace, become an imitator of Him who was born in a stable of poor parents, lived in poverty, had not whereon to lay his head in manhood, and died poor and naked upon a cross.

It was He first raised poverty to a virtue. Poverty, the badge of the despised, the mark of ignominy, the offence of a wise generation cursed with the love of riches and the prospect of hell, is the glorious mark of those chosen for the thrones wherefrom the twelve tribes of Israel are to be judged. Poverty of spirit has always been respected when Catholic instincts swayed

the minds of men, and it became a disgrace only when the spirit of the gospel was mixed up with the spirit of the world. The philosophers of heathen civilization could despise the riches of this world, but a perverse generation which claims to itself the title of Christian, falls far below them. Riches, at any cost, and by any means, are the end of the aspirations, the energies, and the crimes of the majority of those who, in our days, can make unctuous speeches about Christianity and morality, and lard their conversations with texts of Scripture. Many, who may condescend to read these pages, in order to find out the folly which they suppose to be the main-spring of sanctity, will find the chapter on poverty enough to confirm their notions ; and they shall rend their garments, and exclaim, what need have we of more evidence ? Let us remind them of the words of the Wise Man : “ We fools thought their life madness, and their end without honour ; behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and among the saints is their lot ! ”

CHAPTER XXXVII

CLEMENT XIV

CLEMENT XIII. died on the 2nd February, 1769. He was a great friend of the Saint's when a Cardinal, but whilst Pope he did not do much for him except continue the expressions of his friendship, and procure him a hospice in Rome. When the Saint had sung the *Requiem* mass for the repose of his soul, he said to one of his religious, "I have placed the hearts of the Cardinals in the Blood of Jesus; but Ganganelli's heart,—oh! how brightly it shone." History records the prolonged and troublesome conclave which met for the election of a successor to the thirteenth Clement. Many were the surmises as to who was likely to be chosen; and among our religious, as well as many others, the probabilities seemed to be most in favour of Cardinal Stoppani. The Saint, however, held to the prophecy he had made three years before, and said: "No, Ganganelli. I am as certain as that I hold this handkerchief in my hand that Ganganelli will be Pope." When asked for a reason, he would give none, except that he knew it.

The choice of the Cardinals did fall upon Ganganelli, and on the 19th of May, 1769, he became Pope, and took Clement XIV. as his name. It was remarkable that he kept a letter of the Saint's about him during the conclave, because he regarded it as a relic. His great affection for the Saint and his veneration for his virtues were

increased when he saw the prophecy fulfilled, and he said to his chamberlain, a few days after the election : " You will see, Father Paul will pay us a visit." The prelate remarked that it was impossible, as he was then in S. Angelo, and so ill as to be unable to move. " It does not matter," the Pope replied ; " you shall see, he will come." And he was right ; for on the 26th of the month the Saint arrived in Rome. The Pope sent one of his carriages for him as soon as he heard of his arrival, and the meeting between them was most cordial and affectionate. He met the servant of God at the door, embraced him, helped him up to his private chamber, and then made him sit down and take a cup of chocolate, whilst they were engaged a long time in private conversation. When the poor man rejoined his companions, reflections on his reception brought another train of thought to his memory. " Oh ! " he said, " how many journeys have I made through these streets in my bare feet. Oh ! what sufferings have I gone through in this city to carry forward the holy work of the congregation ! "

Few pontiffs have had such diverse opinions formed of their career, even by Catholic writers, as Clement XIV. When he was called to the helm of Christendom the bark of Peter was in a very stormy sea ; the waves of revolution and political immorality were dashing over it, and it required the greatest amount of heavenly and earthly wisdom to steer it with safety. He had a very difficult task before him, and although he faced it manfully, there is room certainly for diversity of opinion as to the way he accomplished it. From every side there were clamours heard for the suppression of the noble Society of Jesus. These men, who had, in the brief

period of a hundred years, become the instructors of Europeans, the Apostles of the Indies, the civilizers of America, and the Bulwark of the Church, had, by the most unaccountable changes of opinion, become the hated of every nation and the proscribed of many. It does not fall within our scope to examine the causes which were at work for their destruction, and we shall therefore confine ourselves to a few remarks upon the Pope's share in the matter. There is no doubt but Clement XIV. was a man of great talents and great virtue. That he had the interests of the Church at heart, and that he dearly loved and cherished religious Orders. The Generals of the Augustinians, Dominicans, Observantines, and Conventuals assisted at his death-bed and S. Alphonsus Liguori, founder of Redemptorists, was miraculously present also. It is certain, too, that he loved the Jesuits, and held out until the year before his death against the cries which reached him from every quarter for their suppression. The Brief, which reduced 25,000 religious to the grade of secular priests, was, however, published by him in 1773, and it grieved the hearts of many excellent bishops, whilst, if we must place faith in accounts shorn of prejudice, it nearly broke his own. That he must have had grave reasons, whether of expediency or otherwise, for this momentous step, it would be rashness to deny. That he was not obliged to put these reasons forth is easily admitted ; that we do not know them is deeply to be regretted. The deed was done, and the enemies of the Church exulted ; infidelity reared its head in triumph, and the champions of orthodoxy sunk beneath the blow in humiliation and suffering. One thing is clear from the whole proceeding. It was

supposed that the general of the Jesuits was the black pope, and that the annihilation of the "Janissaries of the Vatican" would crush the power of the Church. The Church does not depend on religious Orders, no matter how powerful they may be ; and if they were all abolished to-morrow she could go on very well without them. She has derived great benefits from religious bodies in every age of her existence ; they have made her theology, directed her ascetic spirit, fought her enemies, and defended her rights. She has cherished them as her dearest children, and blessed them with privileges and immunities. She would cut off her right arm before she would lose their valuable assistance in the schools, in the missions, in the pulpit, or in the press ; but, if reduced to straits, she could dispense with them, and though she wept over their loss, she could still rejoice in the consciousness of her own innate strength. This was proved in the suppression of the Jesuits ; and if calamities followed the event, benefits were not wanting to counterbalance them.

Clement XIV. found that a measure, which he had every right, human and divine, to carry, was far from satisfying the cravings of the vitiated palate of Europe. Whenever did compromise benefit the unwavering policy of the Church ? Yet he showed her power in what was supposed to be her weakness, and he convinced the world of her independence.

Wise men and saints knew that this suppression was not to last for ever. S. Alphonsus said,—“ If there only remain a single Jesuit in the world he will be powerful enough to raise up his society again.” S. Paul of the Cross wrote a letter of condolence to their then General,

and foretold the resurrection of a body, whose temporary death all pious men lamented.

Here is an extract from the letter :—" With regard to the great affliction which now overcasts the renowned Society of Jesus, believe me that I deeply share in it ; the very thought of this business makes me sigh and shed tears. What else can I do when I see so many innocent religious thus oppressed, the devil triumphing, the greater glory of God lessened, and so many souls lost for want of the spiritual assistance which these good fathers rendered in every part of the world. When I reflect upon the matter I cannot refrain from making special prayer, with the hope that, after a few storms, the God who, *mortificat et vivificat*, will make the said society arise anew with greater glory. That this will be the case is my firm conviction." S. Paul had not seen the Pope for two years before the suppression, as he was ill at S. Angelo. If he had been in Rome the Pope would doubtless have consulted him, and there is no doubt what his advice would have been.

We cannot for a moment conceive that there is any blame attached to the Pontiff for this act. We owe him gratitude and love, such as few pontiffs have such strong rights to claim. We know, as Catholics, that the solemn acts of popes are to be revered and respected, and we have no patience with factious scribblers, who decry and condemn what they cannot sufficiently understand. Hence, without meaning any disrespect to the Society, we say unhesitatingly, Clement did well.

We leave this digression, and return to record what he did for our poor congregation.

The Brief of Benedict XIV. only gave a general appro-

bation to the Institute, and sanctioned its spreading in the Church rather as a trial of its efficiency than as a positive sanction of its working. The members could make their vows and follow their vocation with the blessing of Christ's Vicar upon them, but a more solemn approbation was yet wanting to rank them on a par with the great religious bodies who ornamented the Church throughout the world. The founder foresaw that the time was near at hand when this blessing was about to be conceded ; and during his rest in S. Angelo he reviewed the Rules and Constitutions, and prepared a memorial for their further confirmation. He had given up the idea of solemn vows, and he now asked its recognition as a congregation with all the privileges and none of the inconveniences of a regular Order. In his first conference with Clement XIV. he drew this memorial from his breast and laid it before him. The Pope was true to his wishes when a cardinal, and two prelates, Monsignors De Zelada and Garampi, both afterwards cardinals, were deputed to make the preliminary examination and give in their report. Forty days they spent in this important labour, and the result of their investigation was a suggestion that two points should be mitigated, the time allotted to rest, and the days of fasting. The censors were of opinion that the religious should rest five hours instead of four before matins, and that three days' fast in the week was as much as ordinary constitutions could bear. The Pope would not adopt this slight change without consulting the Saint, who at once saw the reasonableness of the change, and gave his consent.

On the eve of the Assumption, the Pope's confessor,

Father San Giorgio, was commissioned to go to the hospice to tell the founder that the solemn approbation of the Rules by a pontifical Bull was resolved upon. The combination of this great boon, and the day on which it was promised, filled the heart of our Saint with gratitude to the Mother of God, whom he had so tenderly loved and so fervently venerated all his life long. Infirm as he was, he went to the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, and stood in ecstatic delight during the whole of the papal office before the statue of Our Lady, on the very spot where that day fifty years he had made a vow of promoting devotion to the Passion of her Son, and gathering together a body of men who would carry on the same work to the end of time.

The Saint wrote a circular to the different retreats, wherein was ordered a Mass *pro gratiarum actione* and a *Te Deum*. With what joy the good religious executed his orders may be imagined when we consider how long and how anxiously they had looked forward to this event.

On the 16th of November, 1769, the Brief of Approbation, *Salvatoris nostri*, was expedited.¹ Was it by a special design of Providence that this day, which was to be appointed eighty-five years afterwards as the Festival of the Blessed Paul, should be the date of the greatest favour he had received from the Holy See in his life? The Bull *Supremi Apostolatus* was signed on the following day, and the Pope kept it until the 23rd of the month, the Feast of S. Clement, his own patron, and rewarded the congratulations of his dear Father Paul with such a valuable present. The Bull was placed on the altar of the hospice, and the venerable founder, amid

tears of joy, called his children around to pour forth their grateful prayers to the Author of all blessings. From that day to the present the Litany of the Saints is said every day in our retreats for the welfare of the reigning Pontiff.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

BULL—SUPREMI APOSTOLATUS

IT might be interesting to many to read a translation of this Bull, as it not only gives the constitutions of the Order, but is a sample of the manner in which religious bodies are regularly built into the system of the Church. However, as it is so long, and as it is not proper to make an abridgment of such a papal document, we shall simply give its contents in a general way. It begins by setting forth the manner in which it has been procured, and paves the way according to the style of the Roman *Curia* for its licit reception by those to whom it is directed. Every religious Order has a Cardinal protector in Rome, who looks after its interests ; but, whether through the special affection which Clement had for our founder, or the esteem in which he held the body of his children, it is decreed in this Bull that the Pope himself is to be our protector ; an office which, we are happy to record, each pontiff to our present saintly Pius the Ninth, has been pleased graciously to accept and lovingly to fulfil. Then it is decreed that the institute shall be called the Congregation of disclaled clerks of the most Holy Cross and Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the members thereof shall serve God by the four vows of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and an endeavour to promote devotion to the Passion of our Redeemer : this may be called the preamble of the Bull.

Its next clause approves the rules and obliges all who live under them, either as novices or professed, to their observance ; and also enacts that cases that may arise are to be decided according to their tenor. This latter clause avails, of course, only where the canon law is in force ; but, whether it obliges in conscience is to be judged according to the nature of the matter under judgment.

The second clause approves of the habit, rules that the noviciate is to last a year, and that none who are validly professed can leave the Order of their own accord. And that, if cases arise in which a dispensation from the vows may be called for, only the Pope or those whom he may delegate can grant it.

The third clause contains enactments about the administrations of the sacraments in our Retreats, and extends the laws of inclosure to our different houses. It contains some privileges also which are only of personal interest to the priests of the congregation.

The fourth clause gives papal sanction to all the acts of the superiors which are done in accordance with the powers vested in them by the rules.

The fifth clause regards the ordination of our clerks, and lays down rules whereby the bishop and the superiors are to proceed according to the canons in such an important matter.

The sixth regulates the giving and exercising of faculties for confession by the priests of the Order.

The seventh, eighth, and ninth give directions for dealing with refractory members, and those who grow tired of religious life, and provide for justice being done to all cases in which severity is called for. Mercy and

indulgence characterize these clauses, and we have pleasure in recording that the canonical penalties against apostates from religion have never been put in force by our superiors.

The tenth clause authorizes the brethren to beg in the dioceses in which their houses are situated, and forbids any one from interfering with them, or preventing them in the exercise of this right. And the eleventh clause makes wise regulations with regard to the temporalities of the different communities.

The twelfth clause grants various spiritual graces to the missionaries of the Order, to those who assist them, and to those who attend their missions or go through retreats under their direction.

The thirteenth and concluding clause raises the newly-established Congregation to the same rank, and gives to it and its superiors and members all the privileges, graces and indulgences granted to any other Order in the Church. This is one of the most important clauses, and includes almost everything which could be granted by the Holy See to a religious body. Some Orders may be more acceptable to people, clergy, or even the Roman Court for the time existing than others ; but, in the eye of canon law they are equal when such a clause as this has been enacted for them by the supreme legislator.

The Bull concludes by a eulogy of the new Order, and a recommendation of them to the ecclesiastical authorities throughout the world, with those authoritative declarations which clear all previous enactments out of the way of those present being enforced, and provides for their future permanence and stability.

Such is an index of the contents of this document,

uninteresting it may be to many ; but it is the Magna Charta of the Passionists, and one who rejoices in finding happiness under its provisions may be excused if he thrusts it upon the attention of the public.

It may not be out of place to record here the way in which the Saint was occupied between the death of Clement XIII. and the publication of the Bull of his successor. On St. Patrick's day, 1769, he opened a retreat in Corneto which had been ten years in building. This event deserves special notice, as it was the fruit of the gratitude of the people for a mission which he preached to them in 1759.

The Pope, as is usual on the accession of a new Pontiff, published an extraordinary jubilee on his accession to the Chair of S. Peter, and it was ordained that a number of missions should be preached in Rome. Father Paul was old, infirm, and rather deaf ; but such was the estimation in which he was held that his very appearance would be an excellent sermon. The Pope wished him to give one of the missions, and sent the Cardinal Vicar to the hospice to make known his intention to the Saint. He objected, first on the score of humility, then infirmity, then his having given up missions from sheer inability to carry them on seven years before, and, lastly, because he was deaf. The Cardinal overlooked the other objections, and with a smile replied to the last, " At all events your voice is good enough, and as for the hearing you know it does not matter as long as your audience is not deaf." He recognised in the request an intimation of the will of his superior, and since the simple statement of his difficulties did not change his mind, he consented to undertake the work.

Three churches were proposed to him for choice—S. Carlo al Corso, S. Andrea delle Fratte, and the Madonna della Consolazione. Paul chose the last directly, because it was frequented chiefly by the poor, assigning as his reason that it was to them the Lord had sent him—*Evangelizare pauperibus misit me Deus*. His choice was not approved of, and he was obliged to accept the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere.

Just on the day appointed for the commencement of the mission he was taken ill with a fever, and a companion was obliged to preach the first sermon in his place. In a few days he regained some strength, and although he had to be literally carried into the pulpit and out of it again, his sermons were something astonishing. Crowds thronged to the church—cardinals, prelates, bishops, priests secular and regular, and the Roman nobility and gentry were crowded into the basilica. Throughout that ample nave rang the voice of a worn-out apostle, and with breathless attention was his every word gathered up and treasured as an inspiration. The range of his long experience and the sanctity which shone in his life gave him a power and a freedom which he most eloquently used in scourging the abuses which prevailed in high places, and the vices which rotted the consciences of the lowly. When we recollect the sensitiveness of the Roman people, and especially of the Trasteverini, who are supposed to be lineally descended from the Pagan heroes of the ancient city, we may form an idea of the effect of his sermons. It is recorded of a saintly son of S. Paul's, the Venerable Vincent Strambi, that he gave a mission in Rome after its people had disgraced themselves during the usurpation of the first

Napoleon ; when he stood upon the platform to begin his mission, he said, in a sad upbraiding tone, "*Romani, Romani*," and at these two words the whole audience burst into tears. What must have been the sermons of a greater than he when his sonorous voice permeated such an assembly.

The mission was a complete success—Pope, cardinals, prelates, and all, were every day inquiring after him ; and when the last sermon was over—the last which the Saint ever preached, and which contained in it the zeal, and the fire, and the thrilling power of his fifty years of missionary life—the breathless silence, the burst of lamentation which succeeded, the compunction, the forgetfulness of everything but God and the soul, the unearthly, inexplicable, indescribable effect which remained, seemed to pierce the very stones and remain engraven upon the pavement whilst a single one of his hearers lived and visited the spot where he heard the last word and received the last blessing of the aged, mortified, venerable, and heaven-bound Passionist. Not only the basilica but the piazza and the streets were crowded on the last day of the mission, and thousands had to return to their homes, or go to hear less celebrated missionaries, after a fruitless attempt at the chance of hearing Saint Paul of the Cross.

The Saint, in being helped out of the church, ran the danger of having not only his habit, but his very body made into relics by the enthusiastic piety of his audience. A guard of soldiers and a well-closed carriage were requisite to protect him to the hospice, and there he knelt before the crucifix to pour forth the feelings of his heart, to look back upon the labours of his life, to see the end

of his missionary career, to get a notion of the numberless souls he had helped to heaven, and then to exclaim, that he would accept no reward for all this but that God who had inspired him and helped him to the end. Thus concluded the missionary career of S. Paul of the Cross.

CHAPTER XXXIX

LAST VISITATION

WHEN the labour of the last mission was over, and the Saint saw the impossibility of his ever doing more by active work for his neighbour, his longing for solitude and rest to prepare himself for his last passage came strong upon him. He had finished the work for which he knew was destined ; he had founded the Institute, and seen it established lastingly and solemnly ; he had formed a number of disciples to whom he could safely trust its future conduct ; and nothing more remained for him but to end his days in peace. He was seventy-six years of age, and the span of existence which nature promised was but short and doubtful.

At the general chapter held in 1769 he made a piteous address to the capitulars. He besought them to have compassion on his declining years and failing strength, to relieve him of the charge of governing them, take off his badge, and allow him to go to the noviciate and prepare for death. His sins and shortcomings, he said, required atonement ; and how could he offer it sufficiently whilst the case of others made him almost forget himself. The address produced its undesired but natural effect. The chapter saw in it simply the humility of a saint, and they would not place the charge of their souls in imperfect hands whilst they could have a saint

to govern them. It is against the rules for a superior to be elected to an office the third time ; but at the approach of a chapter the fathers took good care to obtain a papal dispensation for their founder, and remonstrances and tears could not move them from their purpose. He was re-elected ; and, seeing that no one would listen to his prayers, he bowed his head to the yoke, and bore it cheerfully.

The duties the election imposed had now to be fulfilled. He visited the province of the Campagna about three years before the time of which we write, and had given the religious there his last advice ; he must make the circuit of the houses in the Patrimony now, and his broken health ill accorded with such a task.

Before starting on his tour, he made the pilgrimage of the Seven Churches in Rome, more as an act of thanksgiving for the graces heaven bestowed upon him, than to gratify his usual piety. The pilgrimage made him long the more for solitude, and his narrow cell in S. Angelo, with the grave of his dear brother, near whose bones he wished his own to be laid, peered out in the vista as the end of his wanderings.

Providence had arranged otherwise. The Pope heard of the Saint's plan for the future. He loved Paul as a father, and always styled him his " papa," and treated him as if he were so in reality ; and he sent for him to know if the programme of his future movements and rest were as had been related to him. The Saint answered in the affirmative. The holy father, who wished to have so holy a soul near him, to commune with him and consult him on matters which required more the light of heaven than human prudence, wished

to keep him in Rome. He therefore said, "Well, Father Paul, I know very well what you would be doing at S. Angelo; you would meditate, and pray for yourself, for us, and for the Church. Now all this, and a good deal more, you can do without leaving Rome." The Saint submitted at once to the will of God manifested through His Vicar, and consented to remain in the holy city. The Pope received this acceding to his wish as a great favour, and bethought him that it was meet he should repay it. Accordingly, on the feast of S. Thomas, December 21, when the holy founder went to wish him a happy birthday, and after his Holiness had honoured him with his usual marks of attention and reverence, he said, "Well, Father Paul, since you have submitted so willingly to the wishes of our Cardinal Vicar and ourselves, we must think of providing you in our city with a house and church for your little community. This is but paying a debt we owe you—give us a little time." He was dismissed from this visit with the privilege of celebrating midnight mass on Christmas Day in the oratory of the hospice.

When the severe season was well nigh spent, the Saint thought he could venture on his intended visitation. He was obliged to get the Pope's leave, on account of the promise which was exacted from him; and, after some difficulties, he at length succeeded in obtaining the consent both of the Pope and his Cardinal Vicar. He then went for the blessing of the holy father, who complained of the Saint's backwardness, if we may so call it, in asking for anything, saying, "We admire your modesty, but really you ought to make bold to speak to us of all your wants, and to know that you can never be

troublesome to us." He then went to ask the blessing of S. Peter before his Confession in the great Basilica, and on 27th March, 1770, and at length started for Civita Vecchia, to visit the retreats of the Patrimony.

On this journey, as he playfully compared himself to a donkey, his companion asked did he ever carry any burdens between Rome and Civita Vecchia. "Burdens!" said the Saint, "aye, did I: cartloads of them. I used to go in the beginning from Monte Argentaro to Rome, always on foot, through the piercing cold of winter and the burning heat of summer. Oh, what I have suffered!" During this tour he made use of a carriage. He was not exempt from the consequences of the title he had assumed—"of the Cross"—on this last journey neither; for when he reached the inn at Montenerone he was nearly stiff with the cold breeze which blew from the Alps, and a frost which chilled the evening air. Crowds gathered around him wherever his arrival became known; and tired and cold as he was, he could not resist the impulse of giving a few words of instruction to the villagers who clustered about the door of his inn.

When he went to the retreat at Corneto, he found that many of the religious were weak in health from years and infirmities, so he gave them the retreat, and spent Holy Week with them. In all he said they could perceive Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. After Easter he would set out to visit once more his beloved Monte Argentaro. The roads were bad, and almost impassable; so he resolved to go by sea. Contrary winds made them put into Montalto; and from there to Orbetello, a distance of about twenty English miles, he had to ride,

The bells were just tolling the *Ave* when he entered this town, the scene of so many labours, so many graces, and so many trials. He quietly retired for the night to the house of a benefactor, and the news spread like wildfire that the Saint was in the town. Next morning the rain fell in torrents, and he could not proceed up the mountain. But neither rain nor hail could keep the Orbetellians in their houses. The streets, the squares, the yard and garden of the benefactor's house, were all thronged with visitors. Here the Saint recognized an old acquaintance; there one who owed his life to his blessing; here, the wounded heart or conscience he had relieved; and there, new petitions for his miraculous powers. Some crowded to kiss his hand—some to shed tears on his feet; and many came with knives and scissors to cut bits off his cloak and habit for relics. It was when he ventured out of doors to visit the churches, or some of his old friends in the town, that the devotion of the people could be witnessed. He could scarcely pass through the crowds. On the next day he ascended the mountain, and exclaimed to his companions as they went along, "Ah, these mountains! with what recollections are they associated!" They had gone but a short distance when the community of the Presentation were seen advancing to meet him. It was remarked that his fervour and exactitude during the visitation were as fresh and new as if he had begun to serve God only yesterday. He then went to S. Joseph's; and the novices who came to meet him, by their angelic countenances, and the fervour of their young piety, filled him with joy. He wrote to the Pope, as requested, to let his Holiness know how he was getting on, and to give

him an account of his religious. The letter was answered by a Brief of which we subjoin a translation :—

“ Clement XIV. servant of the servants of God.

“ Beloved Son, Health and Apostolic Benediction in the Lord.

“ From the paternal love which, you are aware, we entertain for you, you may easily conceive the pleasure with which we read your letters, which breathe so much affection for ourselves and veneration for our Apostolic See ; and which assure us also of the prayers you and your congregation cease not to offer for our weakness, which the clemency of God hath raised to the dignity of His Vicar. Nothing, indeed, could have more fully proved your piety towards us, nor could you have done anything more in accordance with the rule of your Institute, in aid of our affairs, which depend so entirely on the Divine support. Continue, beloved son, to deserve our gratitude, and that of the whole Church, by persevering with your brethren in those petitions which are so necessary for our help. In this manner you will respond to the entire confidence we repose in you, and you will further stimulate that benevolent feeling which we promise shall always be displayed in your need. With these sentiments we trust to behold your congregation increase every day in merit and all Christian virtues. The account which you give of your Institute is most satisfactory to us ; we rejoice to see it propagated in the odour of sanctity, and we shall be always ready to assist it by our authority, protection, and favour. We wish that these our letters should remain as a memorial of our singular goodwill in your behalf, We earnestly

desire that, persevering in what you have begun, your paternal government, joined with our assiduous supplications, may, with the Divine blessing, maintain and increase the congregation to your own great joy. In the spirit of humility and charity we impart to you, beloved son, our apostolic benediction.

“ Given at Rome, at Sta. Maria Maggiore, under the ring of the fisherman, April 21, 1770, the first year of our Pontificate.”

The Saint's exclamation, after he had affectionately kissed this token of the Pope's benevolence, was characteristic. “ Ah, poor me ! I fear I shall hear from our Lord at my death, ‘ Thou hast received good things in thy life.’ ” He could be consoled for his sadness at such marks of esteem only by being told that they were necessary for the welfare of his congregation. His humility was always great, and one of his favourite topics of self-depreciation was his want of regular study. It was well known that he was gifted with great natural talents, and that his supernatural lights gave him a perfect understanding. He wished to be looked upon as an *ignoramus*, even by the youngest religious. During his visitation he was asked to be present at a thesis held by the philosophy class, and when it was over he told the rector that he was much pleased with the evidence he had had of the progress the young men were making. “ Considering the suggestions which were thrown out to them by your paternity, it is a wonder they did not do a great deal better.” “ Suggestions from me ! ” he replied. “ Don't they know that I have no brains ? ” He had always a great opinion of anything that was

done by others, and used invariably to say, when he liked a piece of work, or composition, or anything of that sort, "How well you have done this; I should never have done it half as well." When asked his opinion upon any serious matter which required knowledge and judgment, he would say, "Well, you know I am a poor ignorant man; but I will just give my opinion in order to please you, since you had the humility to ask me for it."

He was very much grieved when all the bulls and documents regarding the foundation of the Institute were read, that he could not erase his own name out of them.

In the last journey, of which we are now taking notes, his badge or shreds from his habit cured people on the very edge of the grave, and beyond the reach of human remedies. He found himself unable to visit any more of the houses, and therefore left Monte Argentaro for Rome on the 5th of May. Orbetello was in commotion again, and many were the tears shed and blessings craved as he hurried the driver of his carriage through the streets, and bade him hasten to be extricated from the throng of people. On reaching Montalto, a scene awaited him. When he passed through the town about a month before, the people were not fully aware of the fact; somebody told them this time, and the whole place was prepared to receive—not with triumphal arches, deputations, inscriptions, speeches, or addresses—but with something more strongly expressive of the presence of a saint amongst the faithful, and reminding us of the account we have of S. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles. Beds with invalids were laid along the streets; the lame,

the deaf, the blind, and the infirm were propped up to where they could receive his blessing, or, perchance, touch his garb. Mothers with children in their arms rushed forward to get their little ones blessed by him ; acclamations, prayers, and thanksgivings rent the air. Clergy and people were all in a state of religious excitement, and it was a wonder to all that several were not crushed beneath the carriage wheels, trampled on by the horses, or bruised to death by the pressing of the crowd. " Ah, miserable me ! " exclaimed the Saint ; " I ought to keep myself under lock and key, and not allow the world to be deceived about me. But, then," he would say, " I don't intend to deceive anybody." In humiliation inwardly, and in glory outwardly, did the holy penitent return once more to the eternal city—never again to leave its sacred soil.

CHAPTER XL

THE PASSIONIST NUNS

THE heart of S. Paul burned so ardently with the love of Jesus crucified, that he was not content with establishing an Institute in which men were bound by the most sacred obligation, to endeavour to spread the same love throughout Christendom ; but he would also have a society of simple virgins who would weep continually over and console by dove-like sighs the sufferings of our Divine Redeemer. His work would not seem complete without this supplement. Devotion to the Passion is more a devotion of the heart than of the mind ; and men, no matter how piously they may be inclined, are apt to fall short in the warmth of their affections, and to do things because they know they ought to do them, rather than because they are drawn to them by their natural or spiritual affections. Women have greater power of heart than mind, as a rule, and their simplicity and strong feelings could make up for the deficiencies caused by the spirit of criticism or lack of affection in men. A convent of nuns was all that was needed to complete the work of the Saint. Ten retreats of Passionists were spread over the Papal States, and two houses were on the borders, with about a hundred religious of the Order, to keep alive the spirit which had animated their founder through the long and uphill work of their foundation. Had he been less keenly alive to

the return we should all make to an infinite love which went down to the depths of suffering and infamy in order to prove its intensity, he would have rested contented with this much. But, like a skilful architect, who, not content with the substantial finish of a building, will add every little ornament and grace that can make it still more perfect and finished, and refine and beautify each little article which he adds to his edifice, so would the Saint act in his work. The active part of the devotion he had provided for, the depth and solidity of the structure he had seen to, and the approval of the best judge had been cordially given to it ; but he would add something still. The small gentle touches of passive devotion, the tender longings of feminine piety, he must bring around the cross, and then there was nothing more to be done but let the work grow by the vitality he had put into it.

Religious orders of nuns have generally been founded under the direction of some holy priest ; for if we except the great S. Teresa, no foundress seems to have originated an Order by her own unaided exertions.

The idea of founding an Order of nuns to cultivate the same spirit, and be known by the same title in the Church, occurred to the Saint very early in his apostolic career. The first intimation seems to have been a revelation which a holy soul under his direction had, that he would one day found a convent of Passionist nuns. He paid very little heed to women's revelations at any time of his life ; and unless he found a great depth of piety accompanying them, he generally put them aside as dreams or fancies. This lady, however, seems to have been a most holy soul ; for after her death the Saint

said, " I earnestly desire that the life of that great servant of God could be written by some learned and devout pen." He soon understood, by one of those great inspirations which were sometimes accorded to him, that it was really the will of God he should found a Passionist sisterhood.

We have the evidence of two or three for this. Mother Angela Teresa of the Assumption deposes as follows in the Processes :—" When I was about six years of age—that is, in 1743—Father Paul came to my father's house, placed his hands on my head, and told me I should be a nun in his Order, and, moreover, that I should be Superior—all of which has come to pass. Some years afterwards, when I had made up my mind to be a nun, and saw no sign of a Passionist convent coming into existence, I used to importune Father Paul to let me become a nun in some other Order. He told me No ; that I was to be a Passionist nun, and nothing else ; but he said, always when he spoke on the subject, ' I shall not see you with the holy habit on.' And when I asked him why, he would not explain, but said simply, ' I shall not get to see you.' "

In 1749 he wrote to a soul under his direction, " His Divine Majesty will bring about the work of the holy virgins. I am desiring it in peace. God wishes to be prayed to. This work must be the fruit of prayer." Yet the foundation seemed hidden by a sort of veil, notwithstanding his predictions, until one day after saying mass, on the feast of S. Mary Magdalen, he showed signs of supernatural communications, by the radiance of his countenance and the copiousness of his tears. All who saw him and under-

stood his spirit, perceived he had had some great light bestowed upon him. This occurred in the commencement of the papacy of Clement XIV. He began to write the Rules of the new Institute then, and waited until Providence should give him a further sign of the thing being practically undertaken. This sign was not long wanting. A wealthy, childless couple in Corneto, named Domenico and Lucia Costantini, with a Canon Don Niccola, a cousin of Domenico's, were moved with the desire of employing their property in the endowment of a convent for Passionist nuns in their native town. They wrote to the Saint on the subject, and he not only approved of their pious intentions, but promised them great blessings from God if they carried them into effect. They possessed some houses in the town, and having bought some more, with a piece of land for a garden, and having privately obtained the sanction of the Bishop, they set to work to put the whole into conventual shape. When the workmen were pulling down some walls, a statue of Our Blessed Lady, which had been bricked in a long time before, accidentally fell out, and was broken in its fall, with the exception of the bust, which is still preserved in the convent, and has become the object of special veneration.

Difficulties arose on all sides ; scoffing and disapprobation from the irreverent and worldly prudent, added to reverses in the fortunes of the benefactors, bid fair to crush the undertaking in its very germ. The servant of God animated them by encouraging letters ; trials were no new things to him, and he learnt by experience what a work must cost which is to be lasting in the Church. Things looked cheering at length. The

benefactors promised four hundred scudi a year during their life, and all their property at their death, as an endowment. The Bishop was not content with this, for he considered fifty scudi a year for each sister little enough. Their recent losses prevented their giving more just at the time, and the work which had gone on so prosperously came suddenly to a standstill.

The Saint did not despond, but looked after his share of the matter. He went to see the Pope on the Feast of S. Joseph, 1770, and laid before his Holiness the plan of the proposed Order, with a copy of the Rules he had just drawn up. The Pope approved of his designs and gave him permission to go to Corneto, whilst he gave the Rules for examination to a Padre Maestro Pastrovichi, who was afterwards Bishop of Viterbo. The learned Prelate's opinion was as follows:—"The characteristics of this Institute are not only in perfect conformity with purity of faith, holiness of life, and strict religious discipline, but they contain in them a spirit of prudence, discretion, and fervour which encourages us to hope much for the spiritual advantage of those who will have the happiness of professing them." They were then examined by the Secretary of the Council, Mgr. de Zelada, and his opinion was equally favourable. It is only needful to observe that the new Order was to be contemplative, and that their rules, in consequence, though very like ours, are somewhat more rigid in a few points, on account of the difference of the kind of life which was enjoined by them.

Clement XIV. was about to approve of the Rules by a Brief, but the Saint considered it more prudent to wait and see how they worked first, and at his instance

the Pope approved them by a simple Rescript, dated the 3rd September, 1770.

The Pope supplied the deficiency of revenue from his own private purse, and all seemed straight, so far as temporal matters went, for the inauguration of the institution. Ten young ladies came from different parts of Italy to be numbered among the children of the Passion, and were so full of fervour, and seemed so suited for their vocation, that they gained the esteem of all who saw them, and made the hearts of the benefactors bound with gladness. They went through their postulancy, and another was added to their number; but when the day fixed for the clothing, the Feast of the Annunciation, came, unexpected obstacles arose. The Saint was suffering from the severe illness which we shall notice hereafter, whilst all this was going on, and it may be said that he founded this Order from his sick bed. The prevention of the event, although a disappointment to him and those interested in it, seemed providential after all, for the clothing of the first Passionist nuns took place on the thirty-fifth anniversary of the day on which the first church of our Institute was opened on Monte Argentaro—that is, on the 3rd of May, 1771. The holy founder himself was unable to be present, and he died without ever having seen any of his spiritual daughters in the habit.

The gates were closed upon these fervent virgins, and not one of them returned to the world which they had left. Mgr. Banditi, afterwards Cardinal, thus writes to S. Paul in May, 1772: "I cannot conclude, my much esteemed Father, without informing you of the singular consolation I experienced in receiving the

religious profession of eleven nuns of your Institute. Their convent, which is full of the spirit of God, already contributes greatly to the Divine glory in this city, and will, I doubt not, bring many blessings on us all in time to come. I can hardly express to you how affecting a ceremony it was, and how much I myself was touched by it. I had previously spoken to each of these holy virgins apart, and I felt convinced they were inspired with a true vocation, and an ardent desire to consecrate themselves to God in the religious state. The Superioress, Assistant, and Consultor were elected according to the constitutions on Thursday morning, and everything was conducted in my presence with the greatest order and unanimity."

The nuns wrote to the Sovereign Pontiff to inform his Holiness of the event which had just taken place, and he was pleased to favour them with a Brief expressive of his paternal regard for them. Although the Order of Passionist nuns has not extended itself very widely, many sisters have died in Corneto in the odour of sanctity, and examples of great holiness are found there at the present day.

CHAPTER XLI

SERIOUS ILLNESS AND OBEDIENCE.

ABOUT the time that the Saint was conversing with the Pope on the affairs of the new convent, and receiving those marks of attention which Clement always showed him, God had a new trial in store for him. It was after that interview the Pope was heard to say, "Oh, what pleasure his conversation affords me! We had determined this morning to receive no one, not even our secretary, but our dear papa is always an exception." It is recorded that when the purport of the visit had been concluded, the Saint was consulted upon the general state of the Church. He warmly recommended a reformation of the clergy, and especially of the regulars, proposing at the same time those means by which he thought the end so much needed and longed for by holy people could prudently and effectively be attained. The holy Father was of the same opinion as the Saint, but he saw a great many obstacles to anything like a reform. Yes; the Council of Trent tried reformation, and only partially succeeded, for, *corruptio optimi pessima*.

The intimate confidence which existed between Clement XIV. and S. Paul of the Cross had a very simple beginning. When Ganganelli first met him, he was struck by his simplicity, sincerity, and straight forwardness. The Pope used to say, "I conceived a

great affection for Father Paul from the very first ; I found him simple and straightforward—one of the old school.” The Saint himself was heard to say, at various times, “ I detest duplicity and dissimulation. I am a Lombard, and what I have in my heart I have also on my tongue.” He would say again, “ In treating of such a multitude of affairs, I am afraid I shall lose some of that simplicity which I have brought with me from my mother’s womb.” Yet all the marks of respect which he received in the Vatican only made him the more reverent in the presence of the Vicar of Christ. The Pope used to ask his blessing sometimes, and he scarcely could conceive it possible that he was in real earnest. Several of the cardinals used to look upon it as an honour to be noticed by the Saint, such was the estimation in which the venerable old man was held in the Roman court.

The Pope’s confessor had a stroke of paralysis, and fears were entertained of his recovery. The Saint was sent for, blessed him, and he recovered perfectly and speedily, without feeling the least effect from the dangerous sort of illness he had been subject to.

As the Advent of 1770 approached, the Saint gave evidence of growing more feeble every day ; he would fast nevertheless, did not his confessor and doctor forbid it. On the eve of the Immaculate Conception, he was fiercely assaulted by devils. Many times during his life did the infernal enemy get leave to treat the Saint like another Job. Sometimes his body would be livid in the morning, as if he had been scourged from head to foot ; at other times, inferior and painful tortures used to be inflicted upon him ; and when all these

could not disturb his equanimity, noises would be made in his room to prevent his sleeping. On the morning of the feast the Pope sent his carriage to the hospice to invite the Saint to spend a few hours in conversation with him, but he was unable to stir hand or foot. To be prostrate on a feast to which he had the most extraordinary devotion, was a cause of great anguish to him ; but his mind was in a state of desolation, and what with the pains of his body and the darkness of his mind, it seemed more than even such a saint could bear. He nauseated food, suffered from pains by day, and could not rest at night, for a whole week. Remedies were prescribed for him by the physicians, and although he said, " Mine is not a medical case, for my illness is caused by devils," he nevertheless took the prescriptions, which evidently made him worse. At length all agreed that his end was approaching, and he was told to prepare for it. He said to his spiritual director, " I die contented, and I have no wish to live longer. To some death is an object of horror, but to me it brings no fear. I accept of death joyfully as a penance for my sins." Some other time he said, " The God who gave me life is welcome to take it back." On the 18th December he begged to be allowed to receive the Viaticum, and that day was partly selected because it was sacred to Our Blessed Lady. He went to confession the night before and the next morning—" not," as he said, " because there was anything to disquiet him, but as an act of obedience." After he had received the Sacrament of Penance, he said to his confessor, " I place all my hope and confidence in the Passion of Jesus. Our Lord well knows that I have laboured all

my life to love Him myself and make others love Him. I trust He will have mercy on me now. Then there are the poor outlaws and sinners whom I have assisted in my missions: won't they pray for me now?" It is worthy of note that he trusted to the prayers of the outcast and most wretched sinners converted by him, rather than the many pious souls he had directed, when the need of grateful prayers was pressing. The love of our life is strong at the approach of death, and, as has been remarked elsewhere, the Saint's predilection in the confessional was for the greatest sinners.

He was heard often to repeat, *My Jesus, mercy!* during the day, both before and after his soul was refreshed and inflamed anew with the love which always burned in it by the holy Viaticum. When he and his confessor were by themselves in the cell, he said, "Now, do you really think I am in such danger?" And being told yes, he replied, "Some time ago our Lord gave me light to see that I had to pass through a great affliction, but not yet to die. I see it now; and my spirit rushed, with right goodwill, at the time to embrace the promised cross." This sentiment implied that he was aware he would not then die; still he acted as if he distrusted his supernatural light, or as if he thought obedience to others was better than trusting to what might be deceptive. "If I die"—this was his last will—"have the charity to perform the obsequies for me privately in your own chapel; then, late in the evening, carry my body secretly to SS. Pietro e Marcellino, and have it buried there without ceremony. When the flesh is decayed, put my bones in a sack and take them on a donkey to Vetralla, and there lay them near those

of my dear brother, Father John Baptist." The confessor told him that he must not be concerned about his burial, for that the Pope had already settled all about that ; and in fact it was ordained that, in case he died, he should be interred solemnly in the church of the Holy Apostles, and that the religious might be at liberty to take his body afterwards to any of their houses, if they were so minded. When he heard this, he remained silent for some moments, and then said, with a sigh, " Ah ! I wished to die in some place where my body would receive no honour." The father who was speaking to him said, " Obedience in life, in death, and after death. Jesus Christ suffered His body to be buried wheresoever His faithful servants chose." After this he spoke no more upon the matter, but only said he thought his illness was not unto death.

The night after this edifying conversation he reposed tranquilly, and was so much better next morning that he could take a little food. When he perceived his improvement, he made thanksgiving in these words : " As the nobles of this world are accustomed to receive memorials when their birthdays approach, so my sweet Jesus has been pleased to accept the petitions presented by my religious before His holy Nativity. By the grace of God, when I am recovered, I shall amend my life." In a visit which he received next day from some prelates of the Pope's household, he said he did not fear death, and thought it was an event more to be wished for than dreaded.

He improved so fast now that he thought he might venture to say Mass on Christmas Day. The Pope, fearing a relapse, forbade him, and he had to be con-

tent with receiving communion and contemplating the glories of the day in his bed.

Towards the 12th of January, 1771, he got an attack of a different nature from the former, which put him into a sort of delirium. Remedies were tried, but in vain, and when the feast of our Lady's Espousals came, he asked again for the holy Viaticum. After this he said to his confessor, "I am not afraid to die, for my Jesus has assured me of Paradise." Again: "I am not afraid, but I do not see yet the hour of my departure."

He alternated between improvement and sinking through the rest of the spring and several of the summer months, and his favourite ejaculations were remarked to have been *Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam—propter magnam gloriam Dei—Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus*—and *Benedictio et claritas, etc.*

It was during these months, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, that he arranged all about the establishment of the convent in Corneto, and he managed also the government of his Order by the help of secretaries.

In the beginning of July he was pronounced to be in imminent danger of death, and his children expected to receive the sad news of their father being no more every moment. He made all the preparation still left him; he stripped himself of everything, and gave all that he took charge of to the first General Consultor, and then begged as an alms some threadbare habit in which he might be buried. He arranged all things for his departure from this life, and requested that the last absolution would be given him when his soul was being separated from his body. His confessor then asked his

blessing, and he raised his crucifix in his feeble hands, saying, " May the Lord impart to you His Spirit ! "

One thing remained now—he must have the Papal blessing before he dies. His confessor was sent off to tell the Pope that he was a faithful son of the Church, and that as such he wished to die. The *Benedictio papalis in articulo mortis* was sent him with mingled grief and love, and gratefully accepted by the apparently dying Saint. He got back his calm and quiet, and had nothing now to disturb him but the attentions which were paid him, and the visits of great personages, who were at the door every moment of the day inquiring after his health.

At length the sickness took a decided turn for the worst, and preparations were being made for the last rites. We shall relate the issue of this change in the words of his infirmarian. " Whilst our father, Paul of the Cross, was at the hospice of S. Crocifisso in Rome, he was seized with a mortal illness which brought him to the very gates of death. Dr. Giuliani, physician to the hospital of S. John Lateran, who attended him daily, observing that his complaint grew worse, declared at length death to be certain, and that he could not live out the week. I went with Father Procurator to tell the Pope that the servant of God was dying. His Holiness, whose love for Father Paul was increased by the fear of losing him, spoke authoritatively these very words: ' We do not choose that he should die now. Tell him we grant him an adjournment ; that he must stay with us a little longer, and that I command him to do so under holy obedience.' We returned to the hospice, delighted with the kindness shown us by the

Pontiff, and gladdened with the hope we began to entertain of our father's recovery. We repeated to him the Pope's message. He wept when he heard it, and turning to the crucifix by his side he said, 'My crucified Lord, I will obey your Vicar.' From that moment he began to rally, was gradually freed from suffering, and restored in a short time to his former health."

This was the merit of an obedience which had forgotten how to act according to any will but the will of God manifested through a superior's voice. It was also the fruit of the lively faith whereby he seemed to see in the Pope the living representative of our Lord. Anecdotes of holy obedience may be given in plenty out of the testimony of those who knew the Saint, and some we have recorded; but this one act exceeds them all, and from it alone the nature of his spirit of obedience may be perfectly gathered.

He survived the very Pontiff who gave him this extraordinary command for more than a year. In a few days he said a joyful mass of thanksgiving for his recovery, and then went to see his Holiness. His first words were, "I owe it to your Holiness, under God, that I am yet alive. I had great faith in your authoritative adjournment, and Our Lord has been pleased to confirm my faith."

CHAPTER **XLII***SS. GIOVANNI E PAOLO*

ON the Celian Mount—near the ruins of the Colosseum, and over the dens where wild beasts used to be kept for torturing Christians to make a pagan holiday—stands now the Basilica of SS. John and Paul.

The edifice is sacred by many memories. Several distinguished prelates, including the prelate of prelates, Pius IX., have gone through the spiritual exercises within the hallowed walls of that Retreat. It is so well known to all who have visited Rome that a description of it is needless. Its name, and that of Passionist, have come to be almost synonyms, for the congregation of the Passion have dwelt there now close upon a century. There are many curious incidents connected with its assignment to our Order which ought not to be passed over in silence.

The holy martyrs SS. John and Paul were two brothers who belonged to the household of Constantia, the daughter of Constantine, and distinguished more by their charity to the poor, and a piety and affability which endeared them to all their fellow-Christians, than from the office to which they were appointed, or the esteem in which they were held by the imperial family. When Julian the Apostate showed the cloven foot, which he had contrived to conceal during his brother's life, he showed with it a specious liberal spirit which only

tempered the sword of persecution he had inherited from his pagan predecessors. The brothers John and Paul were invited to occupy the same, or a higher position in his palace than that which they held in Constantia's. They answered the invitation by showing that they scorned to be numbered amongst the servants of an apostate. They were given ten days to deliberate whether they should save their mortal lives by adoring an image of Jupiter, or forfeit them. Their jailer, Terentianus, came upon the appointed day to receive the martyrs' refusal and blood at the same time. They were beheaded, being Romans, in their own house, for fear of a commotion among the people, and it was given out that they had gone into exile. Their death and its circumstances were told in a marvellous way. Devils took possession of Terentianus and his son, and revealed with their tongues the mystery which surrounded the disappearance of the martyrs. They were freed from their troublesome vexation by kneeling at the martyrs' tomb and promising to embrace Christianity. Terentianus was faithful to his promise, and when a Christian wrote the life of the two brothers.

In the fourth century, S. Pammachius built the present Basilica over the house where the holy martyrs received their crowns ; and the very spot on which they were beheaded is railed in in the nave, and their bodies repose under the high altar. The adjoining monastery changed inhabitants several times, and at the time of our Saint it belonged to a community of the Vincentians.

In the year 1743, when the Saint was in Rome arranging about the affairs of his new Institute, he took a walk one day with Don Tommaso Struzzieri (who became a

Passionist and a bishop), and a Don Francesco Casalini, along the Celian Mount. He paused when they came to SS. Giovanni e Paolo, and asked whose house and church were those. On being informed by one of his companions, he seemed abstracted for a moment, and then exclaimed. "O God!—my house! my house! I have to come and dwell there." Neither understood the meaning of the prophecy until they saw that it became not only his dwelling-place during life, but the resting-place of his body after death.

In 1773, before the Pope went to his country residence, the Father Procurator was sent, on behalf of the Saint, to wish him a happy journey. In the course of conversation, he asked if Father Paul had not had a brother named John, who had left behind the reputation of great virtue in the Order. On being answered in the affirmative, he muttered, "*Joannes et Paulus!*" and said no more. On his return, he acquainted the Saint with his determination of giving him and his children SS. Giovanni e Paolo, with the house attached to it, for a retreat. The Vincentians were removed to S. Andrea on Monte Cavallo. On the 9th December, 1773, after the first vespers of our Lady of Loretto had been recited, the community of Passionists, with their holy founder at their head, removed to SS. John and Paul. The Saint wrote immediately to the Holy Father to thank him for for such a great mark of his attachment. We transcribe the letter in full:—

"Most Holy Father,—

"Whilst I thank the Divine mercy for your happy return to your apostolic residence, I cannot refrain from

adding to the same my heartfelt thanks for the great charity with which you have bestowed upon us the church and house of SS. Giovanni e Paolo. I rejoice in the Lord that your Holiness has founded in the metropolis of the Christian world a house wherein will be made a continual commemoration of the sufferings of our Divine Redeemer, and which will be a lasting monument to Christendom of the piety, earnestness, and zeal of your Holiness for promoting in all hearts an undying devotion to the Passion of Our Lord. As for me, Holy Father, I find myself improved in health, although I cannot say much for my strength, on account of the constant weakly state of my nerves. Still, I am able to celebrate every morning in the little chapel. Besides the prayers which I offer day and night for your Holiness, I supplicate graces for you with more power and efficiency in the tremendous sacrifice of the Mass; nor can I refrain from placing your heart in the Precious Blood when I place the sacred particle in the chalice, in order that, nourished by that crimson stream, it may produce, as it always has done, fruits of eternal life amongst the faithful. The consolation is great indeed which I feel when I think of the protection which the Almighty especially grants you, and the care with which our dear Lady is pleased to guard you."

The Saint laboured to make this Roman retreat not only the first in honour by being the residence of the General but the first also in the exact observance of the rules. The provisions of our constitutions would bring visitors from all parts of the world to SS. John and Paul's; and they, of course, returned to the provinces, or to distant countries, with the idea that whatever they

saw done under the General's eye might be safely drawn into a precedent. The Saint foresaw this, and provided against it. He organized a class of theological students, and placed the Venerable Vincent of S. Paul at their head as lector. A saint was the fittest to form saints; and we believe the other offices in the community, as well as the private positions, were filled with choice subjects.

One or two anecdotes are given from this period which, though of no great consequence in themselves, are worthy of perusal from the spirit which they manifest. One day he came to the students' recreation (for Passionist students recreate with their master, apart from the older portion of the community)—we are doubtful whether it occurred in Rome or not—and somebody remarked that if the holy man died anywhere else but there, he ought to order his heart to be sent to them, for they should like to possess it. One would imagine the Saint had received a mortal wound—in fact, such was the case whenever the most casual expression turned to his praise,—and he warmly said, “My heart deserves to be cut into little bits and given to the birds of the air, for it never knew how to love God as it ought. It deserves to be burnt, and its ashes scattered to the winds.” He left the recreation immediately, and right sorry were his children for their want of discretion in alluding to any topic which was flattering to the pattern of humility.

Their entrance upon possession of the garden allotted to their use at SS. John and Paul's was anything but agreeable to a vine-dresser, who found himself obliged to move elsewhere, as the new community did not want his services. He resolved to be revenged in the best

way he could, and abused the religious and their aged Superior right and left, stopping at nothing which spite, rage, and disappointment suggested. The Rector thought it proper to put a stop to such annoyance, and complained of him to the authorities. The man was taken into custody at once. As soon as the Saint heard of it, he disapproved of the Rector's conduct, and wrote to beg the pardon of the delinquent. The letter arrived just as he was about to be sentenced to be flogged, and regard for the servant of God made the officials pardon him. The man was told to whom he owed his deliverance, and he went straightway to the retreat to ask pardon for what he had done, and offer compensation for the injuries he had caused. The Saint received him affectionately, would not hear of any atonement, and by his charity converted, not for the first time, a bitter enemy into a steadfast friend.

The Venerable Vincent gives us an exact account of how the Saint spent the remainder of his days. He usually sat or knelt the greater part of the day in a little oratory near his cell (which is still as it was when the Saint died: there are the same altar, candlesticks, ornaments, and pictures which he used in saying his last mass), occupied in meditation or spiritual reading. Frequently he called the students to his cell for conference, in order to infuse into their young minds the true spirit of the congregation. When the great feasts of Christmas, Epiphany, Holy Week and Easter came round, he tried to deliver a discourse to the assembled community. He also attended carefully and promptly to the government of the entire Order.

On the feast of SS. John and Paul, June 26, 1774, the

Pope came to visit the Basilica and the shrine of the martyrs. The religious received his Holiness in state, and, since they expected that he would visit the retreat, they had a throne erected for him. He then received the whole community to the usual acts of homage, and spoke to them familiarly and affectionately. The Saint could only exclaim, *Hodie salus domui huic facta est*. When the ceremonial part of the proceedings was over, he took the father into a private room, and they had a long talk together. A religious who was in waiting says, "Father Paul spoke to the Holy Father of God and of His goodness with such spirit and unction, that the Pope stood listening to him with his arms folded on his breast and his head bowed." These two great friends never met in this life again.

CHAPTER XLIII

PIUS VI

SHORTLY after the visit we have just spoken of, the Saint heard with sorrow of the illness of the Pope. He would have flown to his side to comfort, or console, or prepare him for eternity—for his love made him pray for him continually—but it was not to be. A sudden attack prostrated him on the 21st September, 1774, and on the next day he was told that Clement XIV. was no more. Since the death of Father John Baptist, Paul had no greater cause for grief. His tears flowed freely, whilst he wrote to the different houses ordering a *requiem* for the departed. He was carried into the church, and wept and prayed as he sat at the foot of the catafalque whilst the Mass was being celebrated.

As soon as the tributes of affection and gratitude were paid to the memory of our great protector, our holy founder began to pray that God would raise up a worthy successor. He said he felt himself like an orphan child, but that he must not think of his own concerns, because the widowed church, with her manifold necessities, absorbed his attention.

When he heard that Cardinal Braschi was elected on the 15th February, 1775, and had taken the name of Pius VI., he was delighted, and hoped for great things from the well-known virtues and heroism of the new

Pontiff. On the first Sunday in Lent, when the forty-hours' Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was kept in SS. John and Paul, the Pope came to make a visit, and then announced his intention of going to see the Saint. The holy old man was in bed, and when he saw the Vicar of Christ in his cell, he said, "How, holy Father, have you deigned to come and visit a poor sinner like me?" The Pope was charmed with the simplicity and heavenly wisdom of the holy man; he would not allow him to remain uncovered, and put on his *berettino* with his own hand. He prolonged his visit to enjoy his conversation, recommended himself to his prayers, and told him to apply to him in case he needed anything for his congregation. After this, he imparted his blessing, and took his leave.

A gentleman who accompanied his Holiness on this visit gives his account of it in the processes. He says that when the Pope entered the cell, and said, "Oh, Father Paul of the Cross!" the Saint replied, "Ah! the title of *the Cross* would suit your Holiness better." He then said in a whisper to the deponent, "This Pope will have a long and glorious pontificate, but it will be full of calamities, and he shall be obliged to leave Rome." This prophecy was, of course, spoken of at the Vatican, and a prelate came to see him in a few days' time. His testimony runs thus: "Not long before the servant of God departed this life, I went to visit him. He asked me about the health and welfare of the holy Father, and I answered that the Pope was very well. Father Paul then, fixing his eyes upon me, said, 'I am called Paul of the Cross, but I am so only in name. With better reason ought the Holy Father to

have that title. Tell him from me to stretch himself upon the Cross, for he shall have to remain a long time on it.' He had hardly finished these words when suddenly his face seemed lit up, his countenance changed, and turning to the crucifix he broke forth in these expressions with a tone of compassion: 'Ah, poor Church! ah, poor Catholic religion! O Lord, give strength to your Vicar: give him courage and light, that, in all and through all, he may do what is right for the accomplishment of Your holy will.' And then, in a louder tone, with his hands extended towards heaven, and shedding a copious flood of tears, he added, 'Yes, I hope it—yes, I demand it of Thee.' "

History tells us how sadly true this prophecy was. The French Revolution and the exile of the Pontiff have written its fulfilment in letters of blood.

The Venerable Vincent's account will be interesting for these last days. His pains, extreme debility, and inability to take food, all showed that his mortal pilgrimage was drawing to a close. He would not let the slightest opportunity of practising virtue pass by him notwithstanding, and he sought every opportunity of practising humility. Indeed it might be said that humility was his predominant virtue. His need of assistance from others, his exclusion from the regular observance, his dispensation from the rules, and all the little attentions paid to him, made him look upon himself as a useless member, a burden to the community, and the author of bad example. If he thought that he spoke harshly, or displeased the least member of the house, he would instantly ask pardon. A few days before his last illness he went to the sacristy to speak

to somebody, and a lay-brother who was busy there, remained, after being motioned to leave the place, until he should finish what he was about. The Saint calmly said, seeing that he was delaying, "Brother, I tell you to make haste, as I want to speak to this person." No sooner had he uttered these words than he was seized with remorse, and as soon as the conference was over he went to the brother and humbly begged his pardon. Three times he repeated, "Brother, pardon me, for the love of God, if I have offended you."

His own sanctification was nearest to his heart ; but a portion of it, and the most important to us, perhaps, consisted in the pains he took to sanctify his children. The burden of General of the Order was laid upon his shoulders ever since the first chapter was held in Monte Argentaro ; and much as he disliked being master among his brethren, the duties of his office engrossed his attention continually. The time was come, in 1775, for another general chapter, and the Saint spent a considerable time in revising the Rules, and noting such suggestions as he thought advisable to submit to the capitulars, and took into his counsel in this preparation the oldest and most experienced fathers of the Order. The superiors began to arrive for the chapter, and, as they did, he held long conversations with them on the proper mode of governing. The burden of his lectures turned upon gentleness, kindness, and charity, in order, as he said, that the brethren may have courage to advance in perfection.

The chapter was holden in May, and, as aforetime, the fathers had their dispensation ready for the validity of the re-election of the founder in case the choice fell

upon him. He suspected as much, and made them such protestations, and put before them his incapacity in such colours, that they would fain yield, were they not determined to be governed by a saint as long as they could. All his prayers were in vain. He was elected without a dissentient vote, and would not have accepted the office on any account, only that the command of his director, backed by an argument from one of the capitulars, to the effect that "if their consciences allowed them to elect him, he might safely accept of the burden they imposed," put all his scruples to flight.

There were sessions held then in which the Rules were read over, chapter by chapter, and the opinions of all the capitulars, general and provincial, taken upon them. This was a tedious work, and occupied many days, but the Saint wanted not to go to his account without being able to say, "*Opus consummavi quod dedisti mihi ut faciam*;" and he wished to leave an authoritative injunction to each of his children in succeeding generations: "*Ne transgrediaris terminos antiquos quos posuerunt patres tui*" (Prov. xxii. 28). The result of their deliberations was placed, by a deputation from the chapter, before the Pope, who appointed Cardinals Lanze and De Zelada to examine them and the Rules at the same time. Their judgment was quite flattering, and on the 15th September, 1775, his Holiness confirmed anew the Rules and Constitutions by the Bull *Præclara virtutum exempla*.

This Bull confirms all that was done for the congregation by Benedict XIV. and Clement XIV. It also increases the spiritual privileges granted to the missions given by the Passionists, and sanctions the few and trifling alterations which were made in the late general

chapter, and gave utterance to many complementary passages and excellent exhortations for the whole body of the congregation.

This done, the holy founder dissolved this memorable chapter; and his last exhortation to the different superiors, when retiring to their charges in the provinces, was that the promotion of fraternal peace and charity should be the object of their greatest solicitude.

CHAPTER XLIV

DEVOTION TO THE PASSION

THE Passion of our Lord is the foundation of Christian piety ; not only because it is the source of all the graces which go towards the sanctification of souls, but because it possesses besides all the attractions with which an object of contemplation can be invested. There we see God Himself, not only humbled to our own level, but below it. We see Him as a malefactor, condemned, trampled upon, insulted by His own creatures, at the very time that He is opening the gates of heaven, which had been shut against us for so long. To go down to Him in spirit, compassionate Him, and try to take a part in His sufferings, and then rise from this contemplation full of zeal for going through the world, labouring to prevent what crucifies Him again, as well as to bring others to accompany us in this act of devotion, seems the highest and most consoling act of homage and love united which a creature cognizant of the benefits of Redemption can pay to his suffering Lord.

This form of piety was the spring and essence of all that our holy founder did for promoting God's glory during his life and afterwards. His aspirations for close union with God, in his childhood, took this form ; his counsels, his preaching, his guidance of others, his labours, his institute, were all so many manifestations of this spirit of piety.

That an apostle of this devotion should be sent on earth at the close of the seventeenth century was a special ordinance of Divine Providence. It was at this time that the false spirit of quietism, which passed over the humanity of Our Lord as unworthy of being the object of the soul's adoration, had been doing such havoc in ascetic theology. Many devout souls were inspired to stem the progress of the false maxims which dimmed the lustre of an eminent French prelate's writings, and had the sect of the Jansenists for propagandists. Of these it is not our province to speak, but the special mode adopted by Saint Paul of the Cross is so near akin to that which the Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque was instrumental in spreading, that it is difficult to dissociate them. Thoughts about the Passion bring the full force of the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus before us. We see through these wounds, and within the open side, the estimation and love in which we have been held by our Redeemer. The terrors of His judgment are sweetened by the remembrance of His love; and the soul, which trembles before the great truths of eternity, cannot lose confidence when it remembers, at the same time, what its Judge has done to inspire it with hope. Saint Paul always concluded his sermons with such touching sentiments upon the Passion that he moved his audience to tears, and he left that practice as a legacy to his children.

To centre the affections of the human heart upon the humanity of Our Lord had another great effect. It made the adoration of His Divinity more easy, because the assumption of human nature by the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity was the great means chosen for bringing the creature closer to his Creator. The words

of the prophet Baruch, "After this He (God) was seen upon earth and conversed with men," are brought out into their full meaning by contemplating the Passion. The genius of the world had run wild, human reason was being deified, the power of the affections, except for evil, was being denied, piety waxed frigid, or was looked upon as a thing fit only for old women. Our Saint wanted to put the heart into things of faith and Christian practice; he would have every faculty of the body, every chord of the heart, tutored into paying to heaven the duty which the reason proved they owed. What means could be more efficacious than devotion to the Passion of our Redeemer? In contemplating His sufferings, when every member and every sense was afflicted, do we not find our own senses and perceptive faculties sympathizing, almost unknown to ourselves? What is more capable of moving our hearts than the consideration of another undergoing pain for our sakes, and pleading for a return of love in every pang which afflicts him? This was what S. Paul of the Cross felt himself sent for, and the history of his life shows us how he fulfilled his mission. It only remains now to count up what special effects this devotion produced in him personally, for a notion of those will be more powerful than any dry exhortations towards persuading others to follow his example.

His perpetual contemplation on the Passion, as well as the grace with which he turned every subject of conversation upon the sufferings of his Lord, lead us to suppose that if ever anything which absorbed one's whole life and energies was written on the heart, an emblem of the Passion would be found on the Saint's,

As much was revealed to a holy soul, and admitted by his brother before his death ; and after his death, the letters J. and S., with some illegible letters between them, were found engraven over his heart. The heart was so enlarged supernaturally that some ribs were moved out in an extraordinary manner to make room for its pulsation.

One day the Saint was at the foot of the crucifix, pleading, as was his wont, for the salvation of sinners, whose souls were specially dear to him. Long and fervent were the sighs of that loving heart as he reminded his Lord of all he had suffered, and besought Him not to let his sufferings be in vain. He was so thoroughly absorbed in this prayer, that he forgot all about himself. At length he said, " Ah, Lord, I pray for others, and my own soul is only fit for hell." Scarcely had he spoken, when he heard one of those interior locutions which it is difficult to describe, and which are vouchsafed to very few favoured souls, wherein his crucified Lord said to him, " Thy soul is in My heart."

The crucifix which he used in his missions, and which may be seen at present in the room in which the Saint died in SS. John and Paul, Rome, was the instrument of many miracles. Once he passed by a ploughman who was cursing and swearing at a yoke of oxen which were not sufficiently obedient to his wishes. The Saint reproved him, and said that cursing could not improve either man or beast. The man was not in the humour for being preached to at the time, so he took up a gun which lay beside him, and levelled it at him. The Saint raised his crucifix and said, " Since you will not obey the voice of God, nor respect His image, let us see if these

poor brutes will not." The oxen fell on their knees immediately, and such an effect had the unlooked-for scene upon the blasphemer, that he dropped his gun, and reformed his evil habits.

Another time, his large crucifix, which he used at the peroration of his sermons on the missions, and which is still preserved with religious reverence, wrought a no less surprising miracle. There was an obstinate sinner who held out through the whole course of a mission, and would not go to confession, but who came regularly to the sermons. At the very last sermon, when the holy missionary raised the cross for the papal blessing, the hitherto hardened slave of sin saw the right arm of the figure of our Redeemer detach itself from the wood to which it was nailed, and make the holy sign of benediction over the multitude. It need not be said that this was enough to confound the beholder with shame and sorrow for his past offences.

Some of his greatest consolations were derived from the crucifix. He would go through the retreat sometimes in an ecstasy of love, wishing only that he might be consumed altogether in the furnace of the Sacred Heart of his suffering Jesus. Once he was more than ordinarily inflamed with those heavenly longings ; so overpowering were they, that he thought his soul was about to be separated from his body. Wishing, like another Xavier, for some withdrawal of the excess of the supernatural flames of love which lit up his soul, and which were only redoubled in intensity by the copious flood of tears which he shed, he threw himself at the foot of a large crucifix, and besought his Lord to hide him in His sacred wounds. The figure detached an arm from

the cross, and, embracing the Saint, pressed him to the sacred wound in the side. For three long hours he was wrapped in sublime ecstasy, and he himself told a holy soul afterwards that he felt then as if he were in heaven. This celestial favour forms the subject of the large picture which has been painted for the feast of the canonization of the servant of God. He is there represented as raised in mid air above his prie-dieu, a book lies open upon it, a discipline at its foot, his mantle on a stool at its side, and angels all around bearing instruments of the Passion. The date of this glorious favour is not given ; but the circumstances of its narration in the processes would lead us to infer that it must have occurred shortly before his happy passage to eternity.

His devotion to the Passion of Jesus would not be complete without its counterpart—devotion to the Dolors of the Blessed Virgin. His thoughts nearly always brought him to Mount Calvary ; and who can ascend this mountain of bitterness without giving a thought to her who stands transfixed with grief at the foot of the Cross ! He used to say, “ Whoever goes to our crucified Lord will find His Mother with Him ;—where the son is there is the mother.” And in explaining the words of Jeremiah, “ Great as the sea is thy sorrow,” he used to say, “ The sorrow of Mary is like the Mediterranean Sea, from which one passes into the boundless ocean of the Passion of our Lord.” And then he would subjoin, “ The soul can always become rich by fishing for the pearls of the virtues of Jesus and Mary.” When speaking of Our Lady, he generally came to her sorrows, and then he would exclaim, as if he felt those sorrows himself, “ Ah, poor mother ! poor mother ! ”

On a Good Friday towards the close of his life, as he lay ill in the infirmary, the brother brought him the poor pittance which was allowed the religious on that day. He found the old man bathed in tears, and not wishing to ask him the reason, he brought him the food, and begged him to eat it. The Saint replied, "How can I eat, my dear brother, when I call to mind the bitter sorrow of our dear Mother? Oh, dearest Mother," he continued, "what must have been thy sorrow when thou contemplatedst thy beloved Son dead in thy arms!—when thou hadst to return without Him to Bethany! No, brother, I cannot eat anything to-day." And so saying, he had to be helped to kneel before the Blessed Sacrament, where he remained the greater part of the day, and could taste nothing but heavenly food.

He said once that he knew a person to whom Our Lady appeared as she was at the moment the body of her Son was laid in the sepulchre, and that it was difficult to say which of the two looked most like a corpse. In relating this, he burst into tears.

During the last months of his life he was one day conferring on spiritual matters with a saintly soul who had been ten years under his direction without his having ever seen her or spoken with her. It seems that as he was being carried to the sacristy in his chair (for he was unable to walk at the time), he was troubled with some scruples about the confessions he had heard and the absolutions he had given during his long apostolate. He had not entered on the subject of his interview long when the Blessed Virgin, with the Infant Jesus in her arms, appeared surrounded by rays of glory. The Saint cast himself upon his knees, and our Lady said to him,

“ Son, ask me for graces.” Paul asked for the salvation of his soul. Mary then said, with a smile of celestial benevolence, “ Be in peace ; the grace is granted.” She and the Divine Infant placed their hands upon the Saint’s head and disappeared. The lady, who was called Rosa Calabresi, and died several years afterwards in the odour of sanctity, saw the vision, and was for some time deprived of sense and feeling with the wonder and reverence. When she came to the possession of her faculties, she saw the Saint raised about five feet from the pavement, in the air, in a kneeling posture, with his arms extended. He was about an hour in this position, and she could hear him exclaim, now and again, in a sort of stifled voice, “ My crucified Love ! ”

She bore testimony to this vision in the processes, and her evidence was confirmed by the Saint’s director, Father John Mary of S. Ignatius, third General of our Order.

It is supposed that the Saint had many other clear evidences of how acceptable his devotion was to heaven during his life ; but as he was so silent upon these points, we have no evidence of them left us. In this vision the Blessed Virgin foretold him the day and hour of his death. Such was the earthly beatitude which rewarded the devotion of S. Paul of the Cross to the Passion of the Son of God and the Dolors of His Mother.

CHAPTER XLV

TRIBULATIONS

WITHOUT going so far in finding a theme to write upon the actions of our holy founder as to find sermons in stones and good in everything, we may lawfully conclude that he did not assume the title " of the Cross " without some very great reason. His love of the cross and devotion to the Passion would be enough to suggest him such a title ; but there must be something more. Like his predecessor, in mortification as in appellation, S. John of the Cross, there must be something in his life, as seen by his prophetic eye when he first put on the garb of penance which he carried with him to the tomb, that would justify the assumption.

The cross has always been emblematic of sufferings and tribulations. To carry one's cross, to meet crosses, to be crossed, are all synonymous with having to suffer. S. Paul had to suffer ; and although a term of calm and peace solaced the close of his pilgrimage, and the consolations with which his heart was gladdened towards the end invite us rather to the bright side of his death-bed, we must not forget to mention how dearly these anticipations of beatitude were bought.

In one word, his whole life seemed devoid of anything like earthly comfort. He began, when a mere boy, a life of continual mortification : his rest was short and comfortless, his prayers long, his fasts severe, his food

sparing, his clothing austere, his habits retiring. The pleasures of the world were a sealed book to him ; its sins and its follies he did battle with, and knew only as enemies. He suffered from cold and heat as the seasons came round. Long and painful journeys under a summer sun in Italy, and a cold fireless cell during the severest winters, must have told with serious effect upon a frame wasted by hunger and thirst, and defended only by a wretched covering of sackcloth. The discomforts consequent upon the life he embraced, and which formed the very rule under which he lived, were considerably augmented by his own fervour, which moved him to disciplines of blood, kneeling upon iron points, cinctures of pointed chains, and gall and wormwood to savour the few morsels of food he allowed himself.

These mortifications, as was natural, brought on many infirmities. For some fifty years of his life he had to suffer from occasional fits of illness, and from almost constant pains in his members. When utterly prostrate beneath his ailments, he would make them afflict him the more by his want of care, or by the non-intermission of his usual duties. All that could combine to make his bed one of thorns was sure to be found in his poor cell ; and his love of poverty, coupled with his authority, was an obstacle to the carrying out of the intentions of his children with regard to his personal comfort. He loved to imitate his Master ; and the more his bed of illness could be made like the Cross, the more was he pleased. He was afflicted with a complication of diseases—gout, sciatica, rheumatism, and intermittent fever, with painful headaches in his latter days, so much that he himself averred that there was not the breadth of three fingers

in his whole body without its pain. Such a life may be called a crucifixion.

Besides these sufferings he had to bear the opposition of the good and the persecution of the evil-minded during about twenty years, after he began to build his first retreat. His designs were misrepresented, his words were misconstrued, his actions were interpreted into deeds which deserved castigation. Far and wide did false rumours spread about him and the disciples he had collected around him. They came even to the throne of the Sovereign Pontiff, and only a long and searching scrutiny—which filled him with anxiety as it leant now and again to the side of his enemies, until it finally issued in a proclamation of his innocence and worth—put a partial end to these unfounded calumnies. Some of the dirt which these reports threw at him must have stuck even when the examination was closed, and he must have had to hear insinuations from several, anything but complimentary to him and his undertaking, long afterwards. It may be said that death alone put a stop to his sufferings from enemies.

Although the Saint seldom lost a friend when he had once made one, since none could find in his mode of dealing with them a motive for a breach of friendship, yet he had to suffer, and in no small measure either—as the pages of this history sufficiently show—from the ingratitude of those whom he had reared and instructed, and who afterwards deserted the standard he had raised for them to follow. Many also who were found to be unworthy of his care, and were consequently debarred from his confidence, returned the favours they had received by the foul inventions which an imaginary

offence is never at a loss to generate. Add to these, his anxieties during a long term of government, his difficulties with regard to badly provided houses, tepid subjects, breaches of discipline, and the petty dissatisfactions and troubles which must of necessity arise from the contact with the world which the Passionists, by their rule, are obliged to engage in, and you have a notion of what the Saint must have suffered even from his friends. Like his Divine Master, he suffered from all when endeavouring to benefit all.

We need not allude once more to his unceasing toils ; his journeyings by sea and land ; his seeking for audiences of great personages ; his refusals ; his delays ; his missions and retreats ; his foundations ; his copying and changing of the rules ; his preaching ; his administration of the sacraments ; his restless nights, his weary days. These are all attested by the living monument which remains in the Order he has founded ; by the letters, rescripts, and bulls which approve his work ; by the histories which are written ; by the traditions of the Order ; by every town and village he visited in Italy ; by the churches in which his zealous voice was heard : in fine, by the recording angel who will one day show them in detail to the wondering assemblage of the human race. He was labouring always, and rest he knew only by name or anticipation.

It might be supposed from the majority of the facts which we have recorded, and from his habitual way of treating with men, that his soul was always immersed in spiritual delights. Quite the contrary. For upwards of fifty years he suffered from aridity of mind and interior desolation of spirit. Doubts, fears, and the con-

sciousness of his own miseries, troubled him continually. It was only when absorbed in prayer, or when labouring for God, that he found some consolation. The supernatural favours vouchsafed to him were, though not few, still far between. Certainly the effects they left in his soul were lasting and efficacious ; but were it not for that, it is impossible to conceive how he could have lived. He had to fight against temptations even on his death-bed ; and although all his fights ended in victory and glory, they were not the less trying, but even the more so on account of the great sanctity they had to contend against.

Like many other glorious servants of God and lovers of the Crucified, he was tormented also by demons. Besides the secret machinations wherewith they beset his work through the agency of their minions, they also persecuted him under various horrid and revolting shapes. They would appear under dreadful forms, knock the furniture about his rooms, squall like cats, screech like owls, grunt like pigs, and sometimes set up an infernal concert in his room to prevent him taking a little rest when he stood most sorely in need of it. They beat him, and with diabolical sport used to wring his toes when they were aching with the gout.

When the Saint was laid on his poor couch, in the height of his illness, a devil came into his room and dragged him out of the bed, and when he had beat him dreadfully, said, " There now, you have come to disturb me, and you have robbed me of many souls : take that for your pains ! " and then disappeared.

Once when the Saint was returning to Monte Argentario, a whole squad of devils met him, and tormented

him almost to death. They adopted various means of troubling him. During his last illness, seven devils came into his room dressed like medical men. It was when his spirit was in its darkest state of desolation. They examined his disease professionally, and then gave it as their unanimous opinion that he would not live till the Tuesday following. They subjoined that his brother, F. John Baptist, had appeared to a holy soul the night before and said the same thing. They thought that the announcement of approaching death, in his then state of mind, would have succeeded in troubling him. The Saint was too great an adept in discovering the cloven foot, no matter how well it might be concealed. He coolly said that his own physician might have told him as much as that, and that he did not see the necessity of such a *quorum* of gentlemen coming there uninvited and unasked to give him an opinion which one of them might have given just as easily as the seven. This answer broke the spell, and the demons disappeared instantly.

Such is a brief outline of the life and suffering and tribulation led by our holy founder. We must now take the other side, and narrate some of the choicest favours which his crucified Redeemer deigned to bestow upon His faithful servant.

CHAPTER XLVI

SUPERNATURAL FAVOURS

S. PAUL of the Cross used to say, "The food which is taken on the royal table of the Cross is very difficult of digestion to the animal stomach." We may apply this to the understanding of heavenly things by human ingenuity alone. God has been pleased to sanction the labours of His servant Paul by signs from heaven, and it is our duty to record them and reverence them, whether we have grace to understand them or not.

When the Saint was giving a mission in the Isle of Elba, a man who had need of a mission very much happened to be coming into the town on some business or other. About a mile from the town he heard a voice denouncing sin, and displaying the dreadful punishment which awaits the sinner in the next life. He could not let the surprising words out of his mind, and when he arrived in the town, he found, on inquiry, that the famous missionary had just concluded his sermon on sin. He went straightway to the Church and made his peace with God.

This remarkable favour was repeated many times. A poor shepherd on the same island who was obliged by a master, or by his poverty, to stay with his sheep when he might wish to go to the mission, heard every word the missionary said in the wood where he used

to sit in the shade to watch his flock and say his rosary, A sick person in Civita Vecchia heard him from his bed, although the church was the greater part of a mile distant. A doctor in Civita Castellana contrived so to arrange his sick calls that he was able to attend regularly to the mission sermons. On two successive days he was called upon for extra visits, and had to give up, to his great regret, all idea of going to the mission. He stopped on his way to venerate an image of the Madonna which was placed in a niche on the roadside, and whilst there he heard distinctly every word the Saint was saying.

One day a poor man came to Monte Argentaro and asked a priest whom he met in the church if he could see Father Paul of the Cross. The father told him that he could not. Then the man began to cry, and told him that he had lived in sacrilege for fifty years, and that he should continue so perhaps to the end if F. Paul had not appeared to him two or three different times, and threatened with an unsheathed sword to slay him if he did not go to confession. He found a confessor, of course, and returned to his home in peace and happiness. When this father met the Saint, shortly after, he said, in the way of a joke, "So, Father, you have taken to a new way of giving missions." "What is that?" asked the Saint. "Oh, you go about with a sword threatening to kill people if they don't go to confession." He then related the story of the poor man, and he was told by the Saint that it was his guardian angel who took his shape, and preached in his stead, and that that was not the first time.

The Saint laboured hard to extirpate from among the

soldiers quartered in Portercole the vice of gambling, which gave rise to many other crimes worse than itself. So persuasive was his eloquence that the soldiers agreed to bring their cards and dice to the market-place of the city, and there, in sight of the assembled multitude, make a bonfire of them. On the last day of the mission, a procession of the clergy, missionaries, and people wended its way to the market-place in order to enkindle the fire with all possible solemnity. There was one soldier who would not be converted, and he sat outside the door of the barrack, enticing a comrade to play, just as the procession was coming. The sentinel told him to take care, that Father Paul was near at hand, and to go into the house at any rate, and not be giving scandal by his barefaced obstinacy. Instead of listening to this sensible advice, he burst forth into blasphemous and obscene language, and raising his eyes to an ox which had just been slaughtered, said, "I will be as soon converted as that ox returns again to life." The ox was partly flayed by the butcher, at the time, and lay lifeless on the ground. No sooner were the words out of the soldier's mouth, than it rose up and ran with fury against where he sat. He made his escape, however, and the ox dashed its head against the stone on which he sat, covered it with blood, drove it and the cards to a great distance, and fell down again never to rise. What became of the soldier we are not told.

At the close of a very successful mission given by the Saint in Orbetello, in September, 1741, a child which was gazing out of a window at the crowd of people who were leaving the church fell down upon the pavement and was killed at once. Medical assistance was called,

but life was pronounced to be extinct. In the meantime the Saint was returning to Monte Argentaro, and he was just about to enter a boat when the disconsolate parents of the child ran down to the shore and related to him what had happened. He returned with them, and there he saw the corpse of the little innocent. He remained some time silent, then spread his hands over the body. Breathless silence pervaded the crowd of people who were standing around. In a few seconds, life was restored to the child, and Paul gave him back perfectly cured to the arms of his weeping parents.

Our holy father once told a confidential friend that several times, when he could not say a single word upon the platform on account of his great infirmities, his guardian angel preached in his stead. He subjoined: "Oh, how many favours have I not received! and what return do I make for them but ingratitude!" It is needless to recount these favours more in detail, although it might be easily done, since names and dates are given in the documents from which we take our account.

He was several times in danger of losing his life, and an inspiration or interposition of God saved him. Once when he disembarked to give a mission in Longone, he had to climb up a rock, and slipped; and on the very verge, without any visible reason, he was stayed up until assisted to the shore. Another time, he and a companion sat under a tree to refresh themselves upon a journey. Paul said to the other that they had better go off to another shade, and his counsel was followed rather unwillingly; but scarcely were they seated in the next shade, when the former tree fell to the ground with a tremendous crash. Had the two fathers remained, they

would certainly have been killed. He was borne once by angels a long distance, and set down within a few paces of his retreat, when about to perish in the cold. The same favour was granted another time to himself and his brother. He was preaching in the open air once, in a town of Sienna, and the heat of the sun was intolerable. Paul prayed a moment, and a cloud came between him and the sun, and remained there until the conclusion of his discourse.

Paul had often visions of the suffering souls in Purgatory ; they were allowed to come to his cell, relate what they had to endure, and beg his prayers. He would then arise at once, go to some chapel, and so fierce were the disciplines he took that he used to faint under them, and remain several days unable to move in his poor bed. He would then be troubled at having gone beyond the bounds which his director set to his austerities ; but one day his guardian angel consoled him by taking him in spirit to Purgatory for a few minutes, and letting him know experimentally what the holy souls there had to suffer. Ever after this he offered all the satisfactory acts he could for these poor souls, and tried to get others to do the same.

One case is recorded in the acts of his life which gives us an idea of the efficacy of his intercession. There was a priest whom the Saint esteemed very much, and accordingly exhorted often to correct some small failings to which he was subject. One night as the Saint had just retired to rest, he heard an extraordinary knock at his door. Thinking it was the devil come to torment him, he thought just as well to let him stay outside. When the knock was repeated three times, he perceived

that it must be a different visitor, and commanded him to tell who he was, and what brought him there at such an hour. "I am such a priest," he said,—Paul saw his soul by an interior vision,—“who has died this very night, and I am come to tell you that I have been condemned to Purgatory on account of those faults on which you lectured me so often. Oh, how I do suffer ! it seems a thousand years since I passed from my temporal existence.” Paul looked at a watch, and found that he had been dead, according to his own account, just a quarter of an hour.

The servant of God began his prayers and penitential exercises, and ceased not offering all sorts of indulgences and mortifications for the soul of his departed friend until near daybreak. As is usual in such cases, he received no clear intimation of his suffrages being accepted. At length he exclaimed, “Oh, dear Lord, through the love Thou bearest my soul, I beseech Thee liberate my friend from his prison.” He was then given to understand that before midday next day the grace would be granted. At break of day he said mass for his repose, and just as he had consumed the sacred species he saw the soul of the priest go joyfully to heaven.

He was frequently favoured with visions of heaven. He saw Our Lord on His Throne, and Our Blessed Lady ; mysteries of faith were made as plain to him as it was possible in this life through the visions he had of the Blessed Trinity, the angels, souls of the blessed, and foretastes of beatitude.

Rays were seen around his head by some people in Orbetello, and by the priests of the diocese of Montefiascone when he was speaking to them on the love of

Jesus crucified, and of the duties of their state in life. At other times he was seen lifted in the air, and walked sometimes on air or water as if they were solid earth.

The hand of God was always with him, and demonstrated to his own age and to all succeeding ones how acceptable in his sight was a soul which loved Him so much, and did and suffered so much for the glory of His holy Name.

CHAPTER XLVII

LAST ILLNESS

DURING the appendicial sessions to the Chapter, and the trouble and discussion attendant upon the examination of the Rules, the fathers saw that the Saint was likely to succumb beneath the labours which his zeal imposed. He lost all appetite, and his infirmities increased apace, so that on the feast of SS. John and Paul he fainted away four times, and was obliged to be laid upon his bed, from which he never again arose. For the last four months of his life he was unable to take any solid nourishment. Medical men and others supposed the peculiar nature of his ailments to be the result of the extraordinary austerities he practised during life. We cannot, however, subscribe to this opinion, seeing that he lived to the age of nearly eighty-two, and had practised austerities from his childhood. If they were the cause of a serious disease, why was it not brought on sooner? Unlike St. Bernard, he did not regret at the last the severity with which he treated his body. He even regretted that in obedience to medical advice he discontinued for some years of his life the mortification of his thirst. He used to quench his thirst by prayer. In this he was to be admired and imitated, for it is recorded of him that when he and a companion were once on a long journey, the day being excessively warm, they came to a spring on the roadside parched

with thirst, and the Saint said, " Let us deny ourselves a drink in memory of the thirst of Our Lord "; and deny themselves they did.

In the commencement of his last illness he said playfully to those who visited him, " I feel as if I had stones upon my stomach." He was reduced in a few days to such a state that he could only take a little toast-and-water once in the twenty-four hours. He was the very model of patience in the midst of the pains he continually endured, and he showed not the least anxiety to recover. Although seemingly at death's door, he occupied himself with duties of his office, and arranged the affairs of the different retreats by dictating letters to his secretary. He seemed to be more vigorous and fresh every day in the exhortations he delivered to his children as they came severally to inquire after his health.

When he had transacted his business, he caused the door and shutters of his cell to be closed, in order that he might commune the more perfectly with his God.

His devotion increased with his weakness. In his greatest illness he would not omit the daily offering of reciting the rosary which he made to the Mother of God. It was his custom always to say a third part of the rosary every day ; but when ill he used to say the whole fifteen decades. One day the infirmarian perceived he could scarcely articulate, and remonstrated with him. " You cannot go on like this," he said. " Do you not see you have not breath enough to speak ? Don't fatigue yourself by reciting the rosary." He replied, " I wish to say it as long as I am alive ; and if I cannot say it with my lips, I shall say it in my heart." On the Feast of the Assumption he was always

accustomed to spend an hour in special devotion to the Blessed Virgin, in consequence of the rule of a sodality to which he once belonged, and this practice he would not intermit in his last illness.

It was a great hardship to him that he could not say Mass. He who used to have himself carried into the organ gallery, and locked up to adore the Blessed Sacrament when exposed, and would refuse to see the greatest ecclesiastical dignitaries whilst in his little heaven—he who used to remain whole nights and days immovable and unsupported before the tabernacle, wrapped in sublime ecstasies—he who used to slake his natural thirst by visiting the fountain of living waters in the Sacrament of Love, was now prevented from offering up the victim of our salvation. What a trial! He did what he could. A priest with a clear voice said Mass every morning in an oratory contiguous to the Saint's cell, and communicated the venerable patient. No matter how thirsty he might feel, he never would break his fast, though lying awake all night in a sort of fever, and warranted to look upon an inclination to take even a drink as a favourable symptom of his disease. The Pope heard of this, and he sent him a dispensation to receive every four days without being fasting. This dispensation was joyfully made use of; as, with it, and his being able to keep fasting now and again, he contrived to receive his beloved Lord nearly every day,

Towards the end of August the doctor thought the disease was becoming so dangerous that he advised the administration of the last rites. The Saint was desirous of receiving the Viaticum with all the ceremonies he thought suited to the occasion—that is to say, he wished

that the whole community, with such superiors as had not yet returned from the chapter, should be present to hear his last advices. He wished also to ask pardon for all the bad example he had given, and as Superior of the congregation to make his profession of faith.

On the 30th August, the first General Consultor brought the Blessed Sacrament from the church, accompanied by a procession of all the religious bearing lighted torches, and singing canticles and hymns. As soon as the Saint beheld his Redeemer in the priest's hands, he cried out : " Ah, my dear Jesus ! I protest that I wish to live and die in the communion of Thy holy Church. I detest and abhor every error." He then recited, with great feeling and impressiveness, the Apostles' Creed. When this was done, he began his address to the religious, which two of them took down verbatim in an adjoining room :—

" Before everything else, I earnestly recommend fraternal charity : love one another in holy charity. This was the last advice which Jesus left to His Apostles : ' By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one towards another.' I exhort all the fathers, and especially the first Consultor, to preserve in the congregation the spirit of prayer, the spirit of solitude, the spirit of poverty. If this be done, the congregation will shine as the sun in the sight of God and man, and for all ages."

Then turning to the Blessed Sacrament, he said, "*Veni Domine Jesu !*" and the tears flowed down his emaciated cheeks whilst he struck his heart at the *Domine non sum dignus*. Here he called to mind what he considered to have been the scandals of his life. He

asked pardon of all the religious, present and absent, with his face in the dust and his heart shrouded in sorrow, for the bad example he had given during the years God had been pleased to charge him with their government. He added: "Unhappy that I am! behold, I am about to leave you, and go into eternity. I bequeath you little but my bad example, although I must confess such example was not given intentionally, for I have had always at heart your perfection and sanctification. I once more, then, entreat your forgiveness, and recommend to you my poor soul, in order that Our Lord may receive it into the bosom of His mercy, as I hope He will, through the merits of His sacred Death and Passion. Yes, my dear Jesus, though a sinner, I hope soon to come to enjoy Thee in Paradise, to be received at the moment of my death to Thy holy embrace, and to remain for ever united to Thee *in perpetuas æternitates*. I commend to Thee now the poor congregation which is the fruit of the Cross and of Thy Passion and Death."

He wished to make them all know that he had left them under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, and he said, "Thou, O immaculate Virgin, Queen of Martyrs, by the sorrows which thou hast felt in the Passion of thy beloved Son, give to us all thy maternal benediction, for I place all my children, and leave **them** all, under the mantle of thy protection.

"Behold, then, my dear brethren," continued the dying Saint, "the last mementoes which I leave you with all the earnestness of my poor heart. I shall leave you shortly, and await your arrival in Paradise."

Thus ended the last domestic sermon of our holy

founder. God grant it may remain for ever in the hearts of his spiritual children !

He was always praying towards the end. Even his office he would say, although he had received a dispensation from its recital from Clement XIV. Never until absolutely unable did he give it up ; and even then he used to send for a priest to read it to him.

After his thanksgiving for the Viaticum, he desired the superiors to have the rules translated from Latin into the vernacular for the benefit of the lay brothers. He then gave his blessing to all the religious, present and absent, and to all the retreats. He remained some time in silence, and when he spoke again it was to beg of the superiors that they would take care that all the future houses of the Order should be founded in solitude, according to the rule, and that human respect should never induce them to depart from this regulation.

His conversation then was generally mixed with pious counsels, sage advices for every special case which came before him, and exhorting all to be grateful to our benefactors. He made special mention of many who had befriended himself and his Institute, and the Sovereign Pontiff was not forgotten. He said, " If I am saved, as I hope to be through the Passion of Christ and the Dolors of Our Lady, I shall never cease to pray for the holy Pontiff, to whom I leave as a legacy this picture of our Lady of Sorrows, for I am under great obligations to him." Then he added, " Pray for him that the Divine mercy may preserve him for a long time to guide his Church, and may console him with the success of his wishes. *Et quæ placita sunt Deo capiat et tota virtute perficiat.*" Pius VI. sat the longest on the throne of

any pontiff since S. Peter. He nearly reached the twenty-fifth year of his pontificate, and at the time of the Saint's prayer he was Pope's little more than a year.

If any virtue shone stronger than any other in the Saint during his last illness, it was obedience. When Father John Baptist died, he chose for confessor Father John Mary of S. Ignatius, who was afterwards General. This father deposes in the processes—and, by the way, his evidence all through these ponderous tomes is the most valuable—that the Saint was ever most submissive to what he said to him, and always obeyed him like a child. This father appointed a Fra Bartolomeo to be the infirmarian, and ordered the Saint to obey him in everything which regarded himself. As is generally the case with those who get an office beyond their deserts, this good brother pushed his delegated authority a great deal too far. Let us hear his own evidence. It reaches further back than the time of the last illness, but it is not the less valuable on that account. “I was appointed to be his (the Saint's) companion, therefore Father John Mary said to him, ‘Obey Brother Bartholomew in everything which regards yourself’; and the poor man obeyed me like a child. If I told him to eat no more than three chestnuts, he ate only three. The servant of God was naturally fond of fruit, and if I told him to eat the whole or the half of an apple or a pear, he would not eat more. Sometimes I told him to go to bed, and he did so without a word. When it was time to get up, and he felt inclined to rise himself, if I told him to rest a little longer, he did so. He obeyed me in everything. Sometimes he had no relish for food, and he said he thought he could eat a piece of an onion or a bit of garlic; if I said I wouldn't

give it to him, he simply shrugged his shoulders, and said, 'Patience, this is for the love of God.' Sometimes he would say, 'You do well to mortify me in this way, and I am much obliged to you for it.' In a word, the things in which he obeyed me are so numerous that I cannot name them. I know well that I was greatly astonished and edified by him, as were also the religious who might happen to be present. I must confess that I forbade Father Paul, and crossed him in many things, and got others to do the same—just to try his obedience, or hear what answer he might make. I found nothing but docility."

This good lay-brother had for assistant one who made up for the shortness of his tether in authority by a quantity of extra gruffness. He would say generally, "Father, you must go to bed"—"Father, you must say your office"—or, "Father, you must let these people go," if he were talking longer than the brother thought convenient. The Saint would blithely say, "I am obliged to obey. See how he orders me. What can I do?"

Father John Mary, the Saint's confessor, was giving a mission when he heard of the dangerous state of health in which our holy founder was, and he immediately left for Rome. When he arrived, the Saint said, "We have always loved one another, and now you are come to assist me, and to close my eyes." On the feast of Holy Cross, 14th September, he wished to go to confession, and he was heard to say, "By the grace of God, I have a most tranquil conscience." "After receiving absolution," Father John goes on to say, "he asked me for some spiritual advice, saying, 'I want to save this poor soul of mine.'"

Hearing that the confessor was engaged to give a mission in Tolfa, he denied himself the consolation of his presence, and would not have him on any account to omit such an opportunity of working for the salvation of souls, much as he valued his assistance. He told him, "Go, and don't fear about me—I shall not die yet." He even gave particular instructions about securing the success of the mission. Among other things, he told the missionary to stop at a little village called Rota, and invite the people to go to Tolfa.

He now began to divest himself of everything. They were obliged to take away even his soft bed, and give him a straw mattress to die upon. If any one compassionated him in his sufferings, he would say, "My sufferings are sorrowful to you, but they are not at all so to myself." A priest said, "Father, you might yet recover." He answered, "No, no." One day, having endured some violent spasms, he said, "If our time has approached, let us die with fortitude." His sufferings accumulated. He could not swallow a drop of water without pain. He was afflicted with sciatica, rheumatism, a fluxion of the eyes, toothache, and an utter prostration of strength, all together. He even said to his companion, "It seems to me as if my soul wants to detach itself from my body. There is not the breadth of four fingers this moment upon me without pain." When they offered him anything that was repugnant, or when pains tortured him excessively, he simply raised his eyes to heaven, and said, "Blessed be God!"

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE DEATHBED OF A SAINT

PRECIOUS in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints ; and it would be precious in the sight of men too, could they but understand it. Everything about the dying saint gives him a motive for rejoicing when he is gazing from the last border of human life into eternity.

If the world recedes from him, and unveils the deformity and deception which it continually hides under its specious charms, it is only to confirm the opinion he had always held about it, and to gladden him with the thought that he has been wise in time, and despised all the earth could offer him. There is nothing in this world which wraps up his heart, or has to be torn from it by the wrench of death. He has viewed things here with an amiable pity, but love he never had for them, except inasmuch as they formed rounds for the ladder of his perfection. A calm indifference characterises his last thoughts of earth, if indeed he does waste a thought upon it ; for earth was unworthy, and can only be tolerated because a few such as he ward off the scourge which is ever ready to descend upon it from a God it every moment outrages in a thousand ways. His parting from this world is joyful, because he sees there is no possibility now of its ever gaining a hold upon him ; and if it had the slightest hold, which he was continually en-

deavouring to break, he can rejoice now as he sings,
Laqueus contritus est et nos liberati sumus.

His friends delight him. He has laboured all his life to build his friendships on an everlasting basis, to sanctify them, and put his friends always into his debt by the blessings they owed to their connexion with him. If the tear steals into their eye as they find they are about to be bereft of the heart which could sympathise with their sorrows, and the tongue which poured the balm of consolation into their grief-stricken souls, it is only a tear of joy, for they would not deprive him of the happiness he is so soon to enjoy, nor themselves of the addition which glory will make to his charity and power to assist them.

His enemies, are they there in thought, rejoice him ; for, through the pardon which their injuries were the means of his granting, they procure him the brightest jewels in his future crown. In fact, *Omnia cooperantur in bonum iis qui secundum propositum vocati sunt sancti.*

The saint may look around him, as did our Saint Paul of the Cross, and see that all things outside himself help him to eternity, but he cannot leave men with only this small consideration. He has helped them to heaven ; he has sown the seeds of virtue in the hearts of his friends ; he has taught them the way which leads straight to bliss ; and the unconscious sermon which he preaches by his detachment, when the cold hand of death is preparing for the last conflict, brings into his soul that sort of unaccountable joy which floods it with delight, but which cannot be traced to its cause at the time. It is some such feeling as has kept us, some time of our lives, in a glow of good spirits, and on terms of perfect ease and

charity with ourselves and all the world besides. We do not exactly know where it comes from, until reflection, after a long while, points to an unconscious blessing which we have conferred or received.

And when the saint closes his eyes upon this world, and when the thoughts unroll before his mental vision the long, long list which time has written on his memory, will not the consolation of his departure be increased? There are stored up the many heroic deeds to which his lively faith instigated him, and in which his hope sustained him whilst every power seemed leagued against him. There around stand those once perishing souls for whose reclamation from evil he forgot his own necessities, and spent his best energies, his best years, his best abilities, his best everything. The fruits of a burning charity and an equally inflamed zeal, stand around, and demand, not only the opening of the gates of heaven, but a glorious throne therein, around which they may range themselves to thank him for ever for the everlasting happiness he has been the means of procuring them. His labours, his anxieties, his sleepless nights and restless days, all cast up to his account innumerable souls now singing the songs of the beatified.

But when he reflects upon the many years in which his ministerial power has been continually employed in letting the blood of his Redeemer flow into the souls of his children through the channels of the Sacraments; when he remembers how his whole existence has been spent in weeping between the vestibule and the altar for the sins of the people, and in macerating and crucifying his own body to encourage them to satisfaction; when he remembers the numbers he has trained to do

the same work for thousands which he has done himself, and the institution he has raised in the Church, whereby those blessings will be ensured to thousands yet unborn ; when he remembers the words of salvation he has uttered, the sighs of compunction which he has evoked from so many hearts, the tears of contrition he has caused to be shed, the fervent confessions he has caused to be made, the strong resolutions for virtue he has caused to be formed ; when he remembers all this, and the thousand accidental circumstances which surround them to adorn their beauty and enhance their value, well may we exclaim with a holy envy, " Happy, happy is a death-bed such as this ! "

In the vista of his earthly career, some faults, and it may be sins, will rise up to upbraid his conscience, or damp the liveliness of his confidence. But what are they ? A few specks, scarcely perceptible, except on account of the brilliant sunlight of noble deeds in which they appear, and the keenness and sensitiveness of the soul affected by them. What are they ? They are the keys which have unlocked fountains of penitential tears—tears which would have buoyed up the deepest-dyed sinner to heaven, were they shed in his behalf. What are they ? They are the occasions of many a deep plunge into the abyss of humility and human nothingness. They are, in a word, little spots which scarcely appeared before they were thoroughly consumed in the furnace of love into which they fell, and would never have left a trace behind, except that saints have such long memories for their own shortcomings. At death, the dark side and the bright side of the picture which sin has drawn during life are of

course presented to the saint's mind, but it is only in order that the former may cast the latter into bolder relief.

The tempter will make his last attempt to enslave the soul which has rescued so many from his clutches, and fought him out of the fold of Christ so often during his life. But if a multitude of defeats have like power in disheartening a fiend as they have a human assailant, how can he dare to bring an evil suggestion to the saintly mind, except in fear and hesitation? And if disappointed rage and reckless effrontery animate him to put forth his last stake, the saint has too well studied his machinations, he has too often traced his stratagems and foiled his plans, he has had heaven and its powers too long as allies, to feel even troubled by the impotence of the attack. Despair, dread, doubt, and apprehension are the temptations of those who have given but a niggardly satisfaction for their sins, who have balanced the claims of God and the world to their affections too long or who have only learnt how to conquer by the lessons of their own defeat. The saint is not one of those, and the last conquest upon the brink of the grave will only add still more to the joy which almost overwhelms him.

Those saints who have gone before beckon him forward. Those whose lives he had studied, whose actions he had copied, whose footsteps he has followed, and whose virtues he has perhaps excelled, animate with the glad foreshadowings of their welcome, as they appear to him, tuning their golden harps for the song of joy which is to greet his advent amongst them. The Blessed Mother of God, whom he has honoured and caused to be honoured whom he has loved with the tenderness of a child, and

defended with the bravery of a valiant champion, with whom he has spoken in reverential but affectionate accents upon the great affair of his salvation, from whose gracious hands he has received many graces, and upon whose altars he has placed many a thankoffering, sheds the beams of her benignant countenance upon him, spreads her peerless mantle around him, and shows him the way, strewn not with flowers—once with thorns—which leads to her beloved Son.

But what are all these consolations to a saint? They are something, but they are only the outside, the accessories of the great, solid, and lasting one of the love of God—his God and his all. Ah! it was His love that wrought all the wonders which decked His servant's passage through this world. It was this which taught him all his devotions, all his prayers, all his sacrifices, all his good words, good deeds, good aspirations, good intentions. He was nothing, he could do nothing of himself; but the love which God bore him made him unlock the treasury of His graces, and here now is the work of the hand of the Most High. He feels that himself was nothing, and that God was all. He threw himself, like a pliant child, into the arms of the Divine will, and let himself be guided by heavenly grace and inspirations in everything which marked his career. He sees all that has been done for him, and more that could have been done were not his human weakness in the way. Overwhelmed with the weight of the very gratitude this thought inspires, and ravished with the ecstatic delight which he ever felt when he thought upon his God, rushing forward with an eternal longing to his only dwelling-place, the bosom of his Maker, and feeling

that the bonds of human life still keep him back, the excess of this delight is beyond comprehension. It inflames, it warms, it entrances, it vivifies, it does all but beatify ; and if there be any sort of sorrow in the soul of the dying saint, it is that his pilgrimage is prolonged for ever so short a time, and the moments seem years which stand between him and his God. Ah ! children of the world, such a deathbed is worth toiling for. We should all like to be ravished with those sentiments on the brink of eternity. Let us lead the life which will ensure them. Noble examples have we in great plenty ; let us cease to criticise the workings of the Spirit of God in them ; let us view all things with the light of the blessed candle we hold in our hands at the last hour of our lives, and then we shall prize one hour spent in the company of the saints more than scores of years in the tabernacles of sinners.

If such be a poor picture of the deathbed of a saint, it is quite inadequate to delineate the consolations of the deathbed of S. Paul of the Cross.

More than eighty years did he live upon earth in unsullied innocence of soul, and he now waited for his last passage with the white robe of his baptism still unstained. His penances, his mortifications were the guards with which he protected and profited by the graces which God had so liberally bestowed upon him. Thousands and thousands of sinners had he rescued from sin and death. He had preached the efficacy of the Divine word, and kindled the faith in many a heart by the miracles which he wrought, to confirm the doctrines of which he was an exponent. He had done everything which a saint could do to fulfil the mission he had

received. That mission was crowned with complete success, and the children he had sanctified by his own special spirit stood around him to testify to the efficacy of his work.

Let us for a moment enter that poor cell, look at its poor walls, bedecked a few minutes ago with a few paper prints, and now shorn of even these ornaments, to a representation of Christ crucified, and a picture of our Lady of Sorrows. There is no furniture in that room but the poor bed upon which the Saint is suffering his agony. There is nothing seen, nothing heard, in that happiest of cells but what reminds one of the approaching entrance of a blessed spirit into the kingdom of heaven.

He followed his crucified Lord in life ; in death he would not be separated from Him. Naked and deserted, except by a few chosen souls, died the God of the Christians. Despoiled of everything, and assisted only by a few special friends, dies a fervent Christian whom that God's sufferings had charmed into a crucified life. We are not surprised to hear him say he fears not death, and that he longs to go to his God ; and to see him look now at the figure of his Lord, and then at that of his Mother, and then absorbed in the future that awaits him, finds a ray of heavenly joy illumining the very depths of his spirit.

His was the deathbed of a saint.

CHAPTER XLIX

DEATH AND OBSEQUIES

FROM day to day the aged Saint lingered on, growing weaker in body, and stronger in soul ; for it seemed from the spirit of his conversations that as the bonds of his earthly tenement were being loosened, his soul was becoming the more free to give itself to thoughts of heaven.

Father John Mary returned from his mission on the 7th October, and the Saint welcomed his confessor with the affection which the benefit he was to be to him inspired. He confessed on the same evening, and prepared himself to receive the sacrament of Extreme Unction on the next day. His end was evidently approaching, but somehow he contrived always to receive the rites of the Church on feasts of Our Lady, and the illness itself seemed to conform itself in its attacks to the gratifying of these pious wishes. The 8th October was the Feast of the Maternity of Our Lady, and he arranged that he should be anointed after vespers, when the whole community might, without inconvenience, be present. He recalled his confessor to request him to recommend his soul when in the last agony, and to give him absolution. On the morning of the 8th he called the Venerable Vincent to his room, and begged him to prepare him for the sacrament he was about to receive by recalling to his mind its efficacy and fruits.

When the sacrament was being administered, the Saint remained immovable with his hands joined before his breast, and totally absorbed in the great action in which he was engaged. As soon as the religious left his cell, he requested Fra Bartolomeo to allow nobody to visit him except the fathers and brothers; because he wished to be alone with God and his brethren during the time that yet remained to him. For some days he suffered intensely, but the calm and heavenly repose of his exterior gave no index of the pains he endured.

On the Feast of S. Luke, October 18th, 1774, he asked for holy communion, and received it fasting. He wished to have no strangers admitted on that day; but the lay-brother thought he should make an exception in favour of the Bishop of Scala and Rovello, and a monk of S. Gregory who was accompanied by a gentleman from Ravenna. To these the Saint spoke a few words, gave a little brass crucifix, and pointed to it with a peculiar expression—for he would preach Christ crucified to the last. When the monk was retiring from his visit, he said, "That face breathes sanctity. Happy those religious—they have a saint. Yes, truly he is a saint."

Monsignor Stuzzieri, Bishop of Todi, and once our Father Thomas of the Side of Jesus, wrote a few days before this date, requesting the Saint not to die until he saw him. When he heard the letter read, he said with a smile, "Yes, write to him to say that I shall wait for him." The Bishop arrived about midday, a few hours before the Saint breathed his last. When he came, he went straight to the cell of the sick man, who, feeble as he was, would have tried to show the external

marks of respect which were due to the episcopal character, had he not been prevented by his spiritual son's kissing his hand. The Saint said, "I am delighted to see you in such good health," and then he gave expression to the affection with which he always regarded the zealous Bishop. When his lordship left the room, the Saint called the Rector, and told him to see that he and his attendants were treated with all attention.

About the time for vespers he began to feel the chill of death. He then asked to be turned in the bed, so that his face could be towards the crucifix. Then he said, "Call Father John Mary to assist me, for I am very near death." The brother said that the doctors had given a favourable opinion of him that morning, and that there was no appearance of immediate death. He replied, "Yes, there is; call F. John Mary." The brother was still unconvinced; he sat down beside the bed, and rejoined, "But, Father, do you not die cheerfully for the love of God?" The Saint calmly but earnestly answered, "Indeed I die most readily to fulfil the Divine will." He put out his hand then, and, pointing to the crucifix and the picture of Our Lady of Dolors, said, "These are all my hopes—the Passion of Jesus Christ and the Sorrows of our Blessed Lady." The brother remained until vespers were over, and then he called the Father Consultor to judge of the real state of the patient. As soon as he entered the room, he said, "Let them come and assist me, for my death is at hand." The Consultor, not thinking that the chilliness he felt was the harbinger of death, said to him, "Perhaps you are cold on account of the change in the weather." He replied, "No, no; I am dying; let

them come and assist me." His confessor was then sent for, and next came Mgr. Struzziere; then the whole community came straight from choir to his cell. When they were all assembled, and a few privileged seculars with them, the Father Rector commenced the prayers for a departing soul from the Ritual, and those present responded. The Bishop and the Confessor suggested to him various acts of virtue, which he mentally accompanied. The Confessor, seeing that death was approaching, gave him absolution, and this was followed by the papal blessing *in articulo mortis*, and the blessings of the various scapulars, by special delegation from the Pope, and the Generals of the Orders to which the scapulars belonged.

Whilst all the religious were engaged in these beautiful prayers, the Saint was casting his eyes alternately from the crucifix to the picture we have spoken of—our Lady of Dolors, and his countenance was marked with joy and tenderness. His last words, as far as we can gather from the circumstances—for they are not given exactly—seem to have been, "Read me the Passion of Our Lord." The Rector began the reading of the Passion, and the Saint lost the use of speech. The impressiveness of the scene before the religious, and the profound calm suffused over the holy patient, made the reading of the simple gospel narrative more touching than usual. All was still, all was quiet, and everyone was waiting for the last agony. Suddenly a glow of celestial brightness lit up the countenance of the dying Saint; he beckoned with his hand as if motioning to somebody to approach, and then closed his eyes never to open them again.

Persons versed in spiritual things said it must have been a heavenly vision, and that when he once had a sight of messengers from heaven he could no more endure to look upon earthly objects. This opinion was confirmed by a vision which a holy soul was favoured with after the Saint's death, in which he was pleased to say that shortly before his death Our Lord, His Blessed Mother, S. Paul, S. Luke, S. Peter of Alcantara, Father John Baptist, his brother, the other departed members of the Order, and a multitude to whose salvation he had been instrumental in his ministry, came to escort him to his throne of glory. When the eyes were closed, that expression of happiness which his countenance wore was brightened up by every word of the Passion according to S. John which the Rector was reading.

The Bishop could not help feeling the importance of the moment, and the long and deep love which he had for the Order, which taught him the way of virtue and nursed him for the position he held in the hierarchy, made him put forth a petition for its interests. He said, "Father, when you are in Paradise, remember the congregation which has cost you so many labours, and pray for us your poor children. The Saint made signs to express how gladly he should comply with the request.

The countenance of the man of God assumed a placid calm appearance; he seemed gradually to lose every faculty except that of thinking of heaven, and as the words *sublevatis oculis in cælum* were read from the gospel, his soul sweetly departed and went to its rest. He died towards the evening of the 18th October, 1775, at the age of eighty-one years, nine months, and fifteen

days. Thus passed out of this world the soul of our holy founder. His life teaches us how to live, and his death animates us to a holy death.

All present, with one voice, exclaimed, "Well, we have seen now how the saints die." And although the religious were sorrowful at the prospect of losing him, as soon as he was departed, the joy which accompanied his soul seemed to communicate itself to all who were present at its happy passage.

A messenger was despatched at once to bring tidings of his death to the Pope, who, when he heard of it, clasped his hands, and exclaimed, "Oh, happy he! happy he! He has died on a beautiful day; for we read of S. Luke that *he bore in his body the mortification of the cross*, and this servant of God has been eminently his imitator." He then ordered that his body should not be interred in the common burial-ground; but that a special sepulchre should be prepared, and coffins of lead and wood; and, moreover, that he would defray all the expenses of the funeral himself.

The body was clothed in the religious habit, a stole placed about the neck, and a crucifix in the hands; it was then placed upon some bare boards, with a few bricks under it, and ashes sprinkled upon the head, according as the Rule directs.

News of his death soon reached the city, and although the retreat is a considerable way out in the suburbs, crowds came to pay their devotions before the body of one they regarded as a saint. Only a few special friends were allowed to see the corpse on the first evening, as it could not be removed into the church until about midnight. The religious prayed and watched by the

bier all night. It was placed before the high altar in the church in the manner we have mentioned, and four lighted candles were placed around. No sooner were the church doors opened than a crowd assembled, which, in a short time, left scarcely standing-room for a single person in that large basilica. Nobles and plebeians, ecclesiastics and laics, religious and seculars, came with eagerness to approach the corpse, kiss the hands, or take away with them portions of his habit or hair as relics. The devotion and enthusiasm of the faithful would have stripped the body altogether, did not a German cavalier, a great friend of the Saint's, make a barricade with benches, and stand inside to touch the body with objects of devotion, such as rosaries and medals, etc., and give such relics as he judged expedient.

Masses were said by the fathers and various priests all through the morning, and at ten o'clock the *Requiem* was sung, at which Cardinal Boschi, titular of the Church, the Cardinal Vicar, and several dignitaries assisted. There was a perpetual stream of people flowing through the church all the day long, who wept and prayed alternately as they looked upon the placid corpse, which showed an angelic beauty that made all exclaim, "He was a saint; and oh, how beautiful he is in death!"

On the evening of the 19th, a cast was taken from his countenance, and it was with difficulty, as the day closed, that the Vicar of Rome could clear the church. The body was then placed in a coffin and carried to a little room at the bottom of the basilica, near the door on the left, where the bones of Cardinal Macchi are now laid. There, in the presence of a notary, who

read the act of recognition, the body was stripped of the habit, and it and the linen which touched the sacred remains were cut into pieces, and distributed amongst the people. The body was found to be as flexible as when he was alive, a fragrant odour was emitted from it, and the sacred name of Jesus was found engraven over the heart. All were struck by the beauty of his countenance;—it was like nothing they ever saw,—it was something heavenly. The body was then clothed in another habit, enclosed in the coffin, with a few bricks under the head and a brass crucifix upon the breast; with it was enclosed a sealed phial covered with lead, containing a Latin inscription, and a short account of the Saint's life. The lid was then screwed down and sealed with six seals—four of the vicegerent's, and two of the congregation's. The room of sepulture was then shut, and the key consigned to the vicegerent.

On the following morning the church was again crowded, and great was the disappointment of the people at finding the body had been removed. Even the Pope, when he heard the coffin was sealed up, appeared displeased, and said they were too much in a hurry about it. It was his intention, it seems, to have the *precordia* removed; but the fathers, not being aware of this, did not think it right to deviate from the usual custom. Throngs were still seen to come and spend hours before the room in which they knew him to be buried, and when they could get nothing which belonged to him, they cut chips off the door, and treasured them as relics.

On the evening of October 21, Mgr. Marcucci, the

vicegerent, superintended the removal of the coffin into a leaden case, which was sealed like the first. It was then placed in another case of wood, and deposited in a room beneath the spot where the inscription is to be seen in the basilica.

The body lay there until his Beatification was decreed in 1852; it was then taken up, the skeleton was put together by an artist, and a wire gauze mask put over the skull; it was then clothed in the habit, and placed under an altar which was dedicated to him as Blessed Paul of the Cross, in the basilica. There it remains until the new and beautiful chapel, which is now in process of erection, is completed, and the sacred remains will be translated to a more noble resting-place.

NOTE.—The imposing Chapel, with its rich marbles and beautiful paintings, erected through the munificence of Pope Pius IX. was completed in 1880. On 25th April of that year, the remains of the Holy Founder of the Passionists were solemnly transferred to the new Sanctuary. Cardinal Howard, the Titular of the Basilica of SS. John and Paul, pontificated on the occasion, Cardinal Manning and Bishop (afterwards Cardinal) Vaughan, taking part in the ceremonies. Throughout the day many other cardinals and bishops, and immense numbers of the clergy and laity, came to venerate the relics of the Saint and to recommend themselves to his prayers. Pilgrims in ever-increasing numbers continue to visit the shrine.

The Feast of the Translation of the Relics of Saint Paul of the Cross is celebrated on 17th October.

CHAPTER L

MIRACLES AFTER DEATH

SOME Saints have given the great token of their sanctity—miraculous favours obtained from God through their intercession—only after death. Others have wrought wonders before and after, like Saint Paul of the Cross. It is impossible to give a notion of the favours obtained from God through his intercession in a single chapter. Every year, from his death to the present (1867), has been signalized by marked favours which the blessing with his relic or the prayers made to God through him have obtained.

If we had not seen some of those ourselves, we might indulge more in the tone apologetic. We might have quoted the famous incident recorded in the life of S. John Francis Regis, when a Protestant, looking over some miracles reported to have been performed by the Saint, and examining the evidence in support of them as facts, said, "If all your alleged miracles were proved like those, we might believe them," and was surprised to hear that those he had just read were rejected by the Congregation of Rites. Certainly, all the miracles recorded as being performed by Saint Paul have not been examined by this strict tribunal; but they were not required, as two were enough for the Beatification, and two more for the Canonization. They rest upon very strong evidence—no less than the sworn depositions of most respectable and unimpeachable witnesses.

Upon the very day of the Saint's death, he appeared to a child, who was called Paula, in remembrance of his having cured her mother, whilst in pregnancy, of a dangerous illness. The child was in the last stage of measles, and her eyes were closed. She never saw the holy man in life, and her description of him corresponded exactly to his appearance. She said he came and cured her, and cured she was forthwith.

Whilst his body lay in the church, a girl came from the other end of the city in order to see if she would be cured, by his intercession, of a painful and virulent ulcer in the cheek. With difficulty did she get through the crowd, but as soon as she kissed his hand, and touched her cheek with it, she was instantly in the sight of all the people cured by him.

Before the end of the month in which he died, a Poor-Claire nun of Civita Castellana was cured by him.

The touch of a bead which the Saint had used cured a child in December of the same year. A picture of the Saint cured a painful illness in 1776. In the December of the same year an application of a simple picture cured an infant which was horribly deformed at its birth. Bits of his habit, handkerchiefs, or other articles used by him, wrought cures everywhere. Cripples, and persons despaired of by doctors, came to pray at his tomb in SS. John and Paul, and went home restored to health.

In the processes, the names of all these people, and a great many more, are given, with a full description of the nature and stage of their disease, and of the manner and length of time in which they got rid of it.

We do not consider it necessary to transfer them to

our pages. Enough has been said to show that Our Lord is still faithful to His promises, and that His chosen servants do sometimes greater things than He has done. Enough has been said to show that the note of sanctity is still visible in the Church of God through the great holiness of her children, and that the spirit which planted Christianity still continues to maintain it. Enough has been said to show the sanctity of our holy founder ; and if many things have been omitted, we have the precedent of the inspired historian of Our Lord's life for the course we have adopted.

We shall, therefore, content ourselves with briefly detailing the miracles which were proved in Rome, and passed the congregations for the Beatification and Canonization.

The first miracle for the Beatification was the cure of a little boy, which was performed in 1816, forty-one years after the death of the Saint. His father was a surgeon, and he and others of the same profession judged the child, who was just seven years of age, to be beyond the reach of medical art. Aneurism, fever, and a complication of ailments brought him to death's door ; a consultation of physicians ended in the decision that nothing could be done for him. The sorrowing parents looked upon their boy in the last agony, and had to change their sobs into a few broken remarks about the preparation for his funeral. There lay the child, cadaverous, helpless, agonizing, unable to speak, move, or understand. The father, in a mood between despair and hope, said he recollected having a bit of Father Paul's habit in the house, and they had better try the

intercession of the servant of God. They gave him a tiny morsel in a drop of water, which, with much difficulty, they managed to introduce between his clenched teeth. In a moment he was well, arose, called for strong food, and was perfectly recovered.

The second was the cure of a cancer in the breast of a modest young woman who would rather die than undergo an operation which was judged necessary by medical men. She wore a piece of the habit of the venerable Father Paul near her breast, and said, for several days, three Our Fathers and Hail Marys to the Blessed Trinity, in thanksgiving for the graces bestowed upon the servant of God, as it was not then quite lawful to invoke his direct intercession—at least publicly. One day, whilst saying these prayers in the church, she found a thrilling sensation all over her, which made her imagine her end approached. On recovering from her fright she found herself perfectly cured. This happened in November, 1844.

These miracles, with the other evidences of his sanctity closed the case for the Beatification.

From the numerous prodigies which were wrought through the blessed Paul's intercession, since the solemn declaration of 1853, two were selected for the cause of the Canonization.

The first of these was a cure wrought upon a certain Rosa d'Alena, similar to the second recorded above, with the slight difference that she was on her way to the surgeon's to submit to the operation when she accidentally turned into one of our churches, and prayed there before the image of blessed Paul. She had a mass celebrated in his honour also, and before the end of it

the cure was suddenly and perfectly accomplished. This happened in 1858.

The second miracle was the multiplication of corn effected in S. Angelo, near Vetralla, through the Saint's intercession, in 1854. The religious of this retreat found that their supply of corn would not carry them to the summer, and that a bad harvest made it unlikely that begging could succeed in supplying their needs. The brother asked the rector if he should continue to give the usual alms to the poor, and was told that he should. The provincial then told them to have recourse to our blessed founder ; they said prayers in his honour every day, and some of them before the door of the granary measured the corn, and after having fed thirty-six religious and a multitude of visitors and poor for several months, there was more corn found in the storehouse than had been at the beginning. A multitude of people came to have their devotion gratified by a little of the miraculous grain when the miracle became known. The satisfying of their devotion seemed to increase the heap, and it went on thus until the harvest-time.

These two were selected out of a multitude. To give some idea of the graces which have been received, we need only record the fact that at one single altar dedicated to him (it is the custom in Catholic countries for those who receive favours from saints to hang up a silver heart, or some other object, at his altar as a memorial), we have counted 291 silver hearts. There are many altars dedicated to him, and if we were to count up all the votive offerings they would exceed the bounds of credibility.

CHAPTER LI

BEATIFICATION

BEFORE recording the process by which a servant of God is proposed for the veneration of the faithful by the highest authority in the Church, it may not be out of place to say a few words upon the basis on which such a veneration is founded.

It is an instinct of the human heart to pay some sort of respect to departed greatness. The warriors, the lawgivers, the fathers of one's country, the poets, the artists, the writers, who have filled our minds with noble images, and drew us imperceptibly into an admiration of their genius, earn our love in such a manner that we should like to meet them if possible, and manifest our respect for them. Intellect and prowess have always had an undisputed right to human estimation. It was this instinct which in pagan times gave rise to the apotheosis or deifying of notabilities after their decease ; and it was the same sentiment in modern times which turned duchesses into waiting-maids to Voltaire, or draws pilgrims to Stratford-on-Avon from the backwoods of America. The genius of the Church has ever been to sanctify every instinct of nature which could bear being turned to God's honour, and to crush every natural sentiment which bore in a contrary direction. The wise laws and regulations which were made to temper any undue prominence of the best instincts we possess ought

not to be construed into a condemnation of their principle, just as restrictions on the press do not imply an anathema on printing. The watching of times and places for their fitness to receive certain less essential doctrines, and the consequent disappearance of a practice from the annals of a country during certain portions of its history, is no argument at all against the abiding spirit of the Church. The *disciplina arcani* was a rule with her in the beginning, and it is the exception happily now. To take the consequences of her changing discipline in its regard for the premises of an argument which does not draw a conclusion according to her spirit is plain sophistry. If the Church were a huge machine, moved by invisible springs which worked on physical laws, her varying discipline might raise a doubt about her infallibility; but when we know that men, having human means, human eyes, and human minds, under the direction of a spirit which does not change our nature whilst preserving us from error, are the directors of the Church, our views must be quite different.

The Church was slow in putting her hand to the moulding of this instinct according to her own ideas in the beginning, because there was fear of the half-pagan converts turning saints and statues into idols. When her own good time came, and the shackles of persecution were broken off—when she stood forth in the world arrayed in all the grandeur which her Divine Spouse had given her, she brought forth the doctrines which she was obliged to hide under a bushel, and put them upon a candlestick. Not that she made new doctrines. Her doctrines and practices are as old as herself; only she did not put her seal upon them except when

circumstances called for it. Things went on quietly ; and some heresiarch set the Christian world in a blaze about the contrary, and then the Church stepped in and told her children what was her tradition. Veneration and intercession of saints are older than the Church ; but that is not the question we intend to speak about at present.

Whatever men honour in others that they glory in possessing themselves. If the object of a nation's secular worship be seamen or statesmen, her children will aspire to the reefing of sails, or the making of speeches about the destiny of nations. Now, there is no pre-eminence in this life worth contending for, according to the spirit of the Church, but that of pre-eminence in virtue. Hence her care to turn the instinct of her children into a channel which should conduct them to heaven. This, we may venture to remark, was the origin of what is called the *cult* of the saints.

Cult involved a little more than bare respect when saints are concerned ; because the doctrine of the communion of saints obliges us to consider all those who reign with Christ after a perfect life here, after having died in the state of grace, as our brethren. Being our brethren, and feeling a sympathy with us who struggle to follow in their footsteps, they must be very much inclined to help us. As, therefore, it is lawful to ask the prayers of our fellow-Christians here, so is it lawful to ask those of our fellow-Christians who are gone to heaven before us.

The question then arises, in praying to the saints, are we to pray in a general way, or can we address ourselves to particular persons ? If the latter, how

are we to know, with any sort of certainty, who are really in heaven? It is this question the Church undertakes to answer for us in her system of beatification and canonization. Our Lord gives certain signs whereby we may know those who are His chosen servants, and He has been pleased to canonize some saints Himself. The Church acts upon the principle He lays down. She requires heroic virtue and miracles to prove its genuineness before she admits any servant of God to be numbered among her canonized saints. It is not an article of faith that all the canonized saints are in heaven, but it is next door to it; and for a practical conclusion we may safely conclude, if they are not, God help the rest of us!

In the beginning saints were canonized by the *vox populi*, with the authority of the Bishop. This rough and ready way of prefixing *saint* to deceased members of the Church, led, as might be expected, to some inconveniences; and, in 1170, Alexander III. reserved the right of canonization to the Holy See.

Many are puzzled as to the difference between a *blessed* or beatified and a *saint* or canonized. The person to whom the Pope allows the title of *blessed* is pronounced to have been a very holy man or woman, to have had all the virtues, theological and cardinal, in a heroic degree, and to have performed miracles in proof thereof. Cult is permitted to be paid to him in a limited degree, but his relics are not to be carried in procession, and churches or houses cannot be formally dedicated to him. His veneration or invocation is permissive, and although no doubt remains as to his beatitude, still the Holy See does not commit itself to the declaration of his being

in the possession of bliss. Canonization goes the whole way. The *saint* is enrolled in the calendar, and all the honours usually paid to saints in the Catholic Church can and ought to be paid to him. It is the greatest honour which can be conferred upon any member of the Church by the body militant, and only accidental things, such as the class of festivals, can be added further.

The process of Beatification and Canonization is a long, laborious, and expensive one. First of all, the information has to be gathered which can possibly be procured about his life and actions. This must be the sworn testimony of competent witnesses before the pro-authorities. When we take into account the number of places in which a saint has been, and the number of persons who must be summoned to travel a distance, with their expenses paid, and then the writing out, the classifying, and the printing in huge folios of their accumulated evidence, we may form some idea of the trouble attending the very preliminaries to beatification. These ponderous tomes will not be admitted into the court unless there be petitions from cardinals, bishops, generals of orders, and various noteworthy persons for the institution of the suit, if we may so call it. Then there is the *devil's advocate*, a sharp learned theologian, whose business it is to cavil at every bit of the evidence, and reject the facts if they be not sufficiently authenticated. Many a cause is stopped in its very beginning by this worthy gentleman, whose proper title is *Promotor fidei*—Promotor of the Faith. When the processes (such is the name given to the mass of evidence collected) have passed these scrutinies, and leave is given for the introduction of the cause, the servant of God receives the

title of Venerable. There are various questions to be discussed then,—whether religious worship has been offered—whether he has been called *saint*. Any of these things would be a serious objection, and many causes stop there. Then his works are examined; then there is a process about his sanctity in general. If that pass, the apostolic processes, as they are styled, are formed; and then, not before the *venerable* is dead fifty years, the examination of his virtues *in specie* is instituted. That may break down, and the cause is finished. Three congregations are held upon this point of the subject, and when it is carried there is a decree published to the effect that the venerable servant of God did possess the theological and cardinal virtues in a heroic degree. Then comes the discussion on the miracles. This is so severe that it has passed into a proverb that it is a miracle for a miracle to pass the sacred congregation. When two miracles have been proved, there are several congregations held and formalities to be gone through before the decree for beatification is made out and published.

It will be seen from this sketch how serious and formidable a work is the beatification. We have now to give briefly the account of the Beatification of S. Paul of the Cross.

Two years after his death, his children began to get the processes compiled. Six folios of processes were put together, in the various places in which he dwelt, and more than two hundred witnesses were examined. Petitions flowed in from cardinals, bishops, generals of orders, chapters, and communities, in the Papal States (where he principally laboured) and out of them. The

Cardinal Duke of York was the *Ponenti*, and on the doubt being proposed and discussed about their admission, a unanimous vote for the affirmative was passed. On the 22nd September, 1784, Pope Pius VI. signed the commission for the introduction of the cause, and gave the Saint the title of *Venerable*.

The other examinations were interrupted by the troubles of the Church, and not until the reign of Pius VII. was the cause brought as far as the examination of the virtues *in specie*. A dispensation from the fifty years was granted by the Pontiff for this on the 13th August, 1808. The three congregations were held in 1818, 1820, and 1821, and on the 18th February, 1821, the decree about his having practised the virtues in a heroic degree was passed. The last discussion upon those was held in presence of Gregory XVI., but the decree of approbation was signed by his Holiness Pius IX. on the 25th February, 1851. On the 28th September, 1852, the decision—*Tuto procedi posse ad solemnem venerabilis Pauli a Cruce beatificationem*—was signed. On the 1st of October in the same year (1852), the Brief of his beatification was signed and delivered into the hands of our General. Since that day we have prayed to him and honoured him as Blessed Paul of the Cross, and his festival has been kept in several places.

CHAPTER LII

PROGRESS OF THE ORDER

THE genius of the Institute of S. Paul of the Cross can be gathered from his life. It was his intention to assemble a body of men around the crucifix, who, imbued with that spirit which can be imbibed only on Calvary, would go forth to combat sin and promote virtue—men who were first to learn themselves, and know by experience what they were to teach others. Solitude, prayer, and poverty were the three leading features which our holy founder, on his deathbed, recommended to his future children. The solitude of the Passionists, however, is not to be understood as similar to that of the Camaldolese or Trappists, whose life is purely contemplative ; it is rather an apostolic solitude. Their houses ought to be founded outside cities, but near enough to be accessible to the inhabitants, unless exceptional circumstances, as in missionary countries, would move the superiors to act differently. In fact, this spirit of solitude is to be practised midway between the desert and the city, where those who are constantly engaged in the cares of the world might retire to pray and sanctify themselves, and where those who are cut off from the world by the vows of their profession might be easily found to assist them. The spirit of prayer is one which springs directly from the other, and the spirit of poverty bequeathed by the founder has been ever held as a particular source of blessing to his Institute.

We have now to give a few epochs in the history of the Order since the death of S. Paul of the Cross. During his life, as has been remarked, twelve houses were founded, and they were all pretty well supplied with religious when he left them to the care of others, and went to his rest.

Retreats were founded but slowly during the years immediately succeeding the death of S. Paul ; but by degrees the Order extended its branches into Naples, Piedmont, Sardinia, Lombardy, and the Marches. Its members were received with love and veneration by the people of Italy, and the esteem in which they were held in the beginning has never waned.

By a clause in the rules it is provided that the brethren, if called upon by the congregation of Propaganda, shall go on foreign missions. During our founder's life negotiations were going on for carrying out this point of the rule. They came to nothing, however, and the matter lay in abeyance for some few years.

In 1781, the congregation of Propaganda wished to provide pastors for several villages of Catholics on the coast of the Black Sea, who followed the Latin rite from the time of Pope Nicholas I., with pastors. The wars and revolutions which scourged the unfortunate inhabitants of Wallachia, Bulgaria, and Roumania, since the Ottoman encroachments upon Europe, had nearly scattered them to the four winds of heaven, or had so mixed races and creeds that it was difficult to sift one from the other. The celerity of revolutions in these provinces may be estimated from the ease with which the Roumanians got rid of their Hospodar, so late as 1866, without shedding a drop of blood. At the time

of which we write a more than ordinary convulsion had deprived these poor Latins of the few missionaries who had kept the embers of the true faith from being extinguished by Greek or Mussulman. Propaganda proposed terms to our General which were accepted, and a few fathers were sent out to Bulgaria to provide for the spiritual wants of the people. Since then we have always had a bishop and a staff of missionaries in Bulgaria, or more properly in the three provinces of Wallachia, Bulgaria, and Roumania. Many were the difficulties they had to contend against—the superstitions of the people, the intrigues and hatred of the schismatic Greeks, and the stupidity, ignorance, and bigotry of the Porte. It was only in 1838 that the Bishop of Nicopolis, Father Joseph Molajoni, obtained permission to build two churches, which were, by an extraordinary favour, allowed to reach the height of six feet above ground and be covered with a sort of tile. Later on, Mgr. Parsi, Father Angelo, had this permission extended, and his successor Monsignor Joseph Pluym, the present Bishop of Nicopolis, and Administrator of Wallachia, late Provincial of our Order in Belgium, has a flourishing mission, in which nearly twenty members of our congregation are employed, scattered over the three provinces.

The Congregation grew in numbers and in the scope of its work in Italy until Napoleon I. dispersed the religious orders in 1810. The miseries consequent on his tyrannic usurpation, not only of the ancient possessions of temporal governments, but of the Papal dominions, brought affliction into every heart. Old men and old women, who had lived the greater part of their lives away from the world and its distracting

cares, were cast once more upon its waves without any provision for their maintenance, in order to make room for the soldiers and horses of a proud conqueror. The charity of several pious proprietors gave asylum to many of the poor outcasts from the cloister until the storm blew over, until the Pope returned from exile, and until the hallowed precincts of the religious houses were purged from the profanation they had undergone, and opened their gates in 1814 to receive again but a moiety of their former holy occupants. War, penury, and the prevalence of revolutionary ideas had thinned the already broken ranks of the soldiers of Christ, and when the walls of the choir gave back but half the volume of praise which once resounded through it, it seemed as if they were only the ghosts of the departed. A small Congregation like ours must have suffered in proportion to its weakness, for trials tell with more effect upon the weak and unnoticed. When Pius VII., on the 27th June, 1814, restored our congregation to its former rights and privileges, only two-thirds of those who lived at the time of the dispersion returned to regular life ; some had lost their vocation, and many died. The houses of the Order were, however, reoccupied ; and it did not require so long a time as the progress before the dispersion, or the evil days of 1814, would lead us to expect before it regained its pristine vigour. This point once gained, new houses were founded in Italy. Various circumstances, which may be detailed in the next chapter, concurred towards carrying the thoughts of our fathers further north.

In the month of June, 1840, Father Dominic, with three companions, found himself in Belgium awaiting

the putting in order of the Château d'Ere, near Tournay, for a retreat of the Passionists. Admission was sought into France, but the materialistic government of Louis Philippe could not and would not understand the good which a religious community was capable of doing. Belgium, with its new code of ten years old, was neither for nor against such people as religious, although it might be loth to grant the same privileges to them as to masonic lodges. Toleration is all the Passionists wanted, and that they found in Belgium. They found more. They found a zealous bishop and a charitable people, who co-operated in every way, after the first difficulties were surmounted. From Belgium, the Order spread to England (or rather it came through Belgium to England), into France, and into Holland. In the course of some years the Franco-Belgian province was formed.

In 1841 the first Passionist landed in England to reconnoitre the position in which he was to pitch his future camp.

In the year 1845 a colony of Passionists went to Australia, but they were all destined to a series of disappointments, and obstacles which they were not able to overcome finally brought their good intentions to nought. They were not able to organize themselves into a regular body: some spent their best energies in trying to civilize the savages in the bush; others became professors in colleges; more took the duties of secular priests. In a short time two died; two returned to Europe, and still live; and the last of the Australian Passionists died in 1865, just as he was on the point of setting out for England. The ill-success of this mission

has been ascribed to a variety of causes, which it may not be opportune or prudent to discuss at present. At all events, the Order sacrificed some excellent subjects, and the lives which were laid down in the Antipodes under holy obedience will assuredly be the seeds of future blessings, and we may hope and pray that the time is not far distant when Providence shall ordain that some of their brethren may reap the fruits which their tears have sown.

In 1855 a more successful mission of Passionists was sent forth. Dr. O'Connor, the Bishop of Pittsburgh, in the United States of America (who has since exchanged his crozier and mitre for the habit of S. Ignatius of Loyola), obtained a colony of Passionists from our General. The ordinary difficulties of strangers trying to make a home in a strange land were smoothed considerably by the protection and paternal solicitude of the holy Bishop, and the fathers began their work under favourable auspices. Time brought with it, of course, its own crosses; but these were borne with cheerfulness, and left their blessings behind. The foundations in the States have now extended to four houses; and although they have existed only twelve years, and have been organized into a regular province for only four of those, no province of the Order can boast of such rapid growth in so brief a period. This is the more to be admired inasmuch as the American mind, with its wild ideas of liberty and independence, would seem to be totally unsuited for the religious life, where the vow of obedience requires such submission of the individual will. A little reflection, however, and a reference to what has been said in a former chapter about the nature

of religious orders, will explain the apparent phenomenon. A religious order is practically the most perfect system of democratic government which there is upon earth. The superiors are elected by secret suffrage, and only for a time ; and during that time their authority is qualified by a code of regulations which all agree to abide by. It is this feature, we presume, which makes religious orders so prolific amongst our Transatlantic friends.

About the same time an additional province was formed in Italy—the province of the Marches,—so that the drain upon the subjects of the mother house in Rome, and the other retreats which contributed to the foreign foundations, was only another means of increasing the strength and numbers of the original houses.

In 1863 a community was sent to California, but it lasted only a short time. The fathers were dispersed, and a few of them went to Mexico, there to begin a house of the Order, and await in patience the settlement of those storms which agitate that region, which is balanced on the lances of its children in our days between Imperialism and Republicanism.

We have now given a brief sketch of the progress of the Order. Each province, and indeed each house, has its own history, but the history (or chronicles, as they are called) of the Order have in great part to be yet written. The congregation of the Passion now numbers six provinces and two outlying missions, which will, in their day, if they are successful, become also provinces. These provinces embrace a goodly strip of the world. The diversity of nations and characters which are thus united under one head in Rome give

expansion and universality to the work of Saint Paul of the Cross. There are no clauses in his rule which restrict either the work or the spirit of the Order to anything which may be comprehended under the term nationality. His large and loving heart embraces all sinners; and wherever the love of the Crucified could be spread, there was it his will that his children should labour. His rule has an elasticity of character which can be easily accommodated, on its own intrinsic principles, to all nations, tribes, and tongues; and the progress which the Order has made since his death, and more particularly since his beatification, fully corresponds to the longings put forth in its regard by the humble and penitential boy of Castellazzo.

If the voice from abroad is encouraging, that from home is just the reverse, in this year of grace 1867. The second edition of King Henry VIII.'s doings in England in the sixteenth century is being re-issued in Italy in the nineteenth. The pagan organization of the Italian government, after the successes of an unscrupulous monarch and an ex-pirate in 1860, have given a severe blow to religious institutions in Italy. Napoleon I. disbanded the religious orders—Victor Emmanuel has followed his example. A whole province of our Order has been destroyed; the religious are obliged to dress as secular priests, and do what good they can whilst awaiting brighter days. The two other Italian provinces have been maimed, their retreats have been converted into stables or barracks, the religious have been sent adrift without the slightest provision for their maintenance, and riot and ribaldry and debauchery now reign where once were psalmody, prayer, and mortification,

Such is the state of modern *versus* religious progress. In the patrimony of S. Peter alone—and fortunately for our poor congregation in Italy, it is there we have most retreats—do they continue to flourish as aforetime. How long even this may continue, God only knows. Rumours and threats beset the Eternal City, the spirit of the Revolution is biding its time, the infestations of brigands are paving the way for it, and the indifference of many who ought to be ready to die for the Holy Father makes them vacillate between justice and iniquity between the cause of God and the pretensions of Satan. How will all this end? God knoweth.

NOTE.—Since the above was written the Order has been extended to Australia, Germany, Spain, Poland, Mexico, Cuba, Peru, Chile, Brazil, the Argentine Republic, and China. There are at present (1924) fifteen Provinces and three Commissariats, consisting of one hundred and twelve monasteries. The number of Religious is about two thousand five hundred.

CHAPTER LIII

THE PASSIONISTS IN ENGLAND

IT was when the Saint was absorbed in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in the church in Castellazzo that he first imbibed the spirit of praying for the conversion of England. It might have come from the consideration of how many there were who robbed themselves of the sweetness which is found before the Tabernacle, by their denying the Real Presence, and might have been increased by a sight of the sadder condition of those who once knew Him in His Sacrament of Love, and now know Him no more.

But the thought itself must be considered as a special inspiration. It was so new ;—why England any more than other heretical countries ? And it was so constant ; —why should it have continued all his life, and have animated so many of his Italian disciples afterwards ? There must be some particular illumination of the mind which gave rise to a devotion so extraordinary in one who was totally unacquainted with England, except inasmuch as he could glean some tidings of it from his school-books. Up to this time he does not seem to have ever met an Englishman, nor did he afterwards seek for English visitors in order to inform himself concerning the manners and customs of the natives. He knew they were heretics ; but then Swedes, Norwegians, High Dutch, and Genevan Swiss were heretics, and the

Russians were schismatics ; why, therefore, did he not select some other nation besides England ? We cannot account for it except on the hypothesis that God wished him to pray for England, and that he did so accordingly.

“ Ah, England ! England ! ” he exclaimed once to his children, as if he had been in ecstasy ; “ let us pray—let us pray for England. I cannot help praying myself, for whenever I begin to pray this kingdom presents itself to my mind, and it is now fifty years since I began to pray unceasingly for the conversion of England to the faith of its fathers.”

He said, on another occasion, “ What God intends to do to that country I don’t know. Perhaps he will have mercy on it. He may in His goodness bring it back some day to its ancient faith. Well, let us pray any way, and the will of God be done.”

The brother who attended him in his last illness found him one day in ecstasy. When it was over, he said, “ Oh, where have I been now ? I have been in spirit in England, thinking on its heroic martyrs ; and oh, how I have prayed to God for that kingdom ! ”

About the last time he ever said Mass, God was pleased to reward his prayers with a vision of the future. He was seen wrapped in ecstasy during the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice ; and when it was over, he said, his face radiant with joy, “ Oh, what have I seen ?—my children in England !—my religious in England ! ” He said no more, and we do not know whether he saw the future conversion of the country. He must have seen a great deal more than he expressed—certainly more than the bare presence of his religious in England.

He must have seen that there was some great work laid out for them, and that they would do it.

His children did come to England sixty-seven years after his death ; and the way in which this was brought about, though it be not so far beyond the human as were the visions of a Saint, possesses a peculiar charm as the fulfilment of a prophecy. There was a son of S. Paul who had inherited his spirit and his virtues in an eminent degree, and to him the work of bringing the Passionists to England was entrusted. Once a poor boy in an obscure village of Italy, with great talents, nearly entirely neglected, and little of the gifts of person and position which the world deems necessary for the formation of its heroes, he felt an interior impulse to be enrolled amongst the children of Saint Paul of the Cross. There was in his soul, however, a great love for England ; and when he was received as a lay-brother, and assumed the name of Fra Domenico, there seemed little hope of his becoming the famous Father Dominic of the Mother of God, the founder of the Passionists in England. What we should call a mere chance discovered to the master of novices his great talents, and he was at once transferred from the kitchen to the choir. He became, in due course, the professor of theology in our house in Rome, and afterwards a provincial. It was whilst in Rome in the former capacity, in 1830, that by one of those extraordinary and still simple circumstances which seemed to have always shaped his apostolate, he became acquainted with Mr. Spencer (afterwards Father Ignatius). This gentleman introduced the good Padre to several other English people, and by their conversations and fervour the flame

of charity for England, which burned in his breast for twenty-seven years, was enkindled the more. Ten long years were yet to pass before his desires could be realized. A great many interested themselves in bringing the Passionists to England,—Cardinal Acton, Mr. De Lisle, Mrs. Canning, Mr. Spencer, and Cardinal Wiseman. There were great promises and good wishes, and plenty of affectionate greetings, for the colony which Father Dominic was to bring with him. The General Chapter of our Order in 1839 received favourably a petition which was presented by Cardinal Acton for the foundation in England, and resolutions were passed in furtherance of the project. However, when Father Dominic did at last arrive, in 1841, and came again with two companions in 1842, he found that it was necessary to begin amid poverty and difficulties the work of his long prayers. On the 17th February, 1842, the Retreat of S. Michael, Aston Hall, was opened, and the Passionists began their duties as well as they could. The friends did not cease to continue so; but the first missionaries of our Order in England were not taken over and made comfortable by some great benefactor, as might be expected. They had to fight their way uphill, and bravely they fought it and conquered. The difficulties which beset our predecessors, and indeed some who yet remain with us to tell us of them,—their want of subjects—their want of funds—their trials from within and from without—their expectations—their disappointments—their crosses—their persecutions,—all these are too recent and too fresh in the memories of many to become matters of history. We shall therefore be silent upon them, and speak rather of other matters.

Three or four houses were founded in England within

ten years after Father Dominic's coming ; but their communities had in some cases to be transplanted in the ten succeeding years, and the working of the Order had to be suited to the exigencies of the place in which its members were situated. Finally, three houses were found sufficient to contain the number of Passionists who could be left to do our work in England ; and at the present date we have S. Joseph's Retreat, Highgate, London ; S. Saviour's Broadway, Worcestershire ; and S. Anne's, near S. Helen's, Lancashire, in England.

In 1856, a house of the Order was founded in Dublin ; in 1863, a hospice was founded in Paris ; and in 1865 a house was founded in Glasgow. These six houses, which contain about one hundred Passionists, form what is called the Anglo-Hibernian Province.

Thus did Father Dominic's mission succeed, and the prophecies which he made about his successors are coming true every day.

NOTE.—In 1924 there are thirteen Retreats in this Province and two hundred and forty-eight Religious. The three Retreats in Australia constitute a separate Province.

CHAPTER LIV

CANONIZATION

THE year 1867 will ever be memorable in the annals of the Church, for it has been rendered famous by the greatest event which history has ever recorded. On the 29th of June of that year a grand function took place in S. Peter's, Rome, which has moved the world to its very centre, and brought upon earth a foretaste of heaven. It was not a human event ; it went beyond all things which man can conceive. It seemed to raise the Church above her highest prerogative, and make her look down with sovereign contempt, mingled with pity, on the poor miserable world with which she had had to do battle for eighteen centuries. The vaunted progress and civilization of this age did duty on that day at S. Peter's. It proved the Catholicity and unity of the Catholic Church. In olden times, when few looked beyond the boundaries of their counties—when bishops sometimes fancied their dioceses little worlds, there was more or less a tendency to substitute isolation and nationality for the large spirit of Catholicity. The course of modern events broke down the boundaries of little kingdoms, and threw them into continents, under the names of empires. The railways and telegraphs ran through walls and mountains, went under the sea, and through the air, and bound the world together in a unity of communication, if not of interest. This facilitated the spread of correct ideas throughout

the world ; and if good and evil took equal advantage of modern improvements, and in some cases evil seems to have the odds, it is well to see an instance in which good has been victorious.

In 1865, his Holiness Pope Pius IX. sent a circular letter to the bishops of the Catholic Church, inviting them to the celebration of the eighteen hundredth anniversary of the martyrdom of S. Peter. This letter was not a command, but a simple invitation, and yet it moved the whole world. The behest of the Father of the Faithful was enough for his children. Every nation sent its representatives to bring their tributes of love in faith, unity, and temporal assistance to the tomb of the Apostles. A function to correspond with this unanimous voice of Christendom was prepared for the pilgrims, and it is this function we are now to describe.

Several servants of God had been given the title of Blessed some years before this date ; their causes were also going on favourably, for miracles were not wanting to supply the necessary assurance for enrolling them in the catalogue of the saints. Twenty-five were selected, because their causes were concluded, and the various phases of their sanctity accorded remarkably with the circumstances of our days. Twenty-one martyrs, two confessors, and two virgins formed this glorious band. The martyrs were S. Josephat Kunceвич, a Polish bishop; S. Peter d'Arbues, a Spanish priest ; the nineteen martyrs of Gorcum, all Dutchmen. The confessors were S. Paul of the Cross and S. Leonard of Port Maurice, both natives of northern Italy. The virgins, S. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds, a Neapolitan, and S. Germaine Cousin, a French shepherdess.

The victories of the Church have been gained after a very peculiar fashion. She conquers by the blood of her martyrs, just as the victory of the Son of God began to be gained when He expired on the Cross. The great enemies of the Church are—heresy, schism, and indifference (which includes all sorts of worldliness and secret societies) ; and although the two first did damage enough in times gone by, they do not seem to be content with their gains, which included a goodly portion of Europe, but must endeavour to gain something in our day also. Still, heresy and schism are no longer what they were, for they have spent themselves, and the evil-disposed have grown tired of them as merely half-measures. Indifference, or worldliness, is the one leader of modern hostility to the Church. The others fight with commissions under it, and in some places as allies.

Now Pius IX. has singularly gauged the wants of the Church, and known her power from the very commencement of his pontificate. Every solemn pronouncement of his bears the unmistakable evidence of a wisdom superior to this world. When the powers of the earth tie the hands of their subjects from assisting him, and pretend reverence whilst they see him robbed of his patrimony ; when the enemies of order begin to exult over the probable destruction of the Church, he sits on his throne, and makes them feel how much they deceive themselves. It is not by the mere display of power that he does this, but by the very nature of that display.

This was singularly shown in the canonization. Let us take the instance of the martyrs.

S. Josephat was martyred by the Greek schismatics, the martyrs of Gorcum by the Dutch Calvinists, and

S. Peter d'Arbues by the Spanish Jews. The future victory of the Church over her enemies was celebrated in the canonization of their victims, and strange and unintelligible as such an expectation may appear, no heart could have assisted at the function and not throb with a sense of its certainty. The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians ; and since the blood of Stephen foreshadowed the conversion of Saul, the purple fountains from the dying soldiers of the cross have always produced fruit in washing out the errors of those who opened them. Without faith one cannot realize this ; but, with faith and history, who can doubt it ? It was these sensations produced upon the mind spontaneously by the very preliminaries of the function of S. Peter's day which gave it such a wonderful power. The martyrs were the first in order of time and rank for canonization, and the countries which gave them birth and gathered their blood sent their bishops and clergy to Rome to rejoice over the earthly crowns, by which the Head of the Church solemnized their triumph.

The first of the saints, not martyrs, was S. Paul of the Cross ; the next was S. Leonard of Port Maurice, who 'was a contemporary of S. Paul's, and whose body is still conserved in the Church of S. Gregory, in Rome, about ten minutes' walk from SS. John and Paul, the earthly resting-place of S. Paul of the Cross. S. Mary Frances was a virgin who led the life of a nun in her own home, and through a series of persecutions, trials, and wonders became the beloved and venerated of her native place. The favourite saint of the Roman ladies was *la pastorella*, the shepherdess, S. Germaine Cousin. She died at the age of twenty-two, after having under-

gone a slow martyrdom under the cruelty of a step-mother. We cannot afford to give a longer history of these great modern saints. Striking instances were not wanting which gave a special grace to the great festival ; such as the relations of some of them walking in the procession, and the homely reverence with which their deeds were extolled by the Roman populace.

Our attention was, as a matter of course, chiefly engrossed by our holy founder, S. Paul. From every part of the world in which his children exist, representatives were sent to Rome for the occasion.

None of those who assisted at his canonization struck the beholders so forcibly as Rosa d'Alena, a lady of Gaeta, whom he had cured of a virulent cancer in 1758. Her cure was so complete and so extraordinary that it was one of the miracles selected for the process of canonization, and it passed the congregations triumphantly. She remained in reverence and gratitude, shedding a profusion of tears, at the precincts of the altar, where the function took place. To the stranger this was a moving spectacle. There he saw living and giving testimony to the freshness of the Church's spirit, the subject of a recent miracle performed by the invocation of a saint. Arguments ceased at the threshold of S. Peter's on that day ; the Church's dogmas were not a matter of cold logic or explanation ; you felt that you had but to touch and see the great verities which her heroes had testified and her priests were teaching. But we are anticipating. A description of the function, by one who had the happiness of witnessing it and bearing a part in it, will be the shortest and simplest way of coming to the conclusions which it

suggested. We shall begin with the gathering of the crowd and the procession.

The dawning of the 29th of June found the piazza of S. Peter's alive with people ; several from the towns near Rome had travelled all night to the place, and several more had snatched a few hours' repose upon the pavement of the cortile with marble slabs or wallets for their pillows, in order to be in time for a good place in the morning. At five o'clock the places began to be taken, and before six the single file of carriages, and the many streets leading to the Vatican, were pouring their contents into the great square. Only the Catholic Church could assemble such a crowd as thronged to the bronze gates and filled the greatest basilica ever raised by the hands of man on that day. Every nation under the sun, from the farthest point of New Zealand to the icebergs of Greenland, from Islands of the Pacific to the British Islands, and round again to the same point, not a man could be found who could not hear his own language spoken in that grand court of the Most High. All nations, tribes, and tongues were there. In their bishops and priests were they there, in their kinsfolk and neighbours were they there, in their offerings and hopes were there every member of the Catholic Church ; and their presence proved that she was not the Church of a nation or empire, but the Church of all nations kingdoms, and empires. Since the day on which the Holy Ghost came down in tongues of fire, and that every one heard the Apostles speak in their own language the wonderful works of God, never was such an extraordinary collection of the children of Adam. The thought that but one faith, one hope, one charity

animated that huge assemblage, and pointed their aspirations to one eternal home, as it bowed their knees and understandings to the profession of the same religion, was something which it required S. Peter's alone to create. And in subdued anxiety and religious awe did they all wend their way to where they could best listen and praise ; and in holy joy and enthusiasm did they range themselves in order around the confession of the Prince of the Apostles, to hear for once the infallible voice of his 259th successor, who, venerable of years and sanctity, sat upon his chair, and broke to nearly three hundred millions of souls the bread of salvation—of him, whose voice was heard to the uttermost bounds of the earth as it gave forth an unmistakable sound, the echo of a higher voice in heaven.

At seven o'clock, the time appointed for the function to begin, the procession started from the Sixtine Chapel, and all along the cortile to the centre of the piazza, then across to the other, so to the door of S. Peter's, a passage was kept clear for it by two files of soldiers. The Cross, with two acolytes, led the way, and was immediately followed by two sets of boys in white soutannes and ferajuoli, bearing a white biretta in one hand and a torch in the other. These were orphans from two different institutions in Rome. They were followed by about twenty friars in dark brown habits and blue cords—the Franciscans, called Alcanterines ; after them came the discalced Augustinians, whose habits were darker in hue ; these were followed by the Capuchins, in flowing beards and sandalled feet. The White habit of the Friars de Mercede appeared now, contrasting with the black habits of the Minims, who

came on after. Two other species of Franciscans succeeded, whose habits varied somewhat in hue. They were followed by the Eremites of S. Augustine, the Grand Carmelites, the Servites; and after those the procession of friars closed by the picturesque and graceful habit of S. Dominic. It took a considerable time for those friars, whose names were connected with so much of the Church's history, and whose habits had been worn by some of her greatest saints, to pass. The variety of colours and costume, with the varying expressions of countenance in such a venerable array of men, who had sacrificed the world and trampled upon its glory to live in poverty and self-denial, was a striking scene to those who lived in cold regions of heresy, where the habits of religion cannot be seen outside the monastic grounds.

Next came a no less striking sight, which filled the spectators even more than the preceding with historic recollections. They were the various branches of the great Benedictine family, or monks of the West, preceded by a small number of the monks of the East,—the Olivetans, Cistercians, Vallambrosians, and Camaldolese, in their white and mixed habits, giving the place of honour to members of the far-famed monastery of Monte Cassino. These latter were vested in black. The Canons of S. John Lateran, in their robes, concluded this part of the procession.

The Cross of the Secular Clergy came now, followed by the pupils of the Roman Seminary, and they were succeeded by the parish priests of Rome, vested in cotta and red stole. After these came the Collegiate and Cathedral Canons of the various basilicas, each preceded

by their own cross and canopy, and accompanied by a choir which sang in harmony the hymns which belonged to the offices of the new saints. The vicegerent, with his officials, concluded this portion of the procession.

The next portion of the procession was composed of seven large banners of the new saints, preceded and followed by members of their orders, if they were religious or secular priests; if they were not, relatives had their places here. The following was the order:—

The Consultors of the Congregation of Rites went first; then—

The banner of S. Germaine Cousin, the Shepherdess, preceded by six priests of the archdiocese of Toulouse, accompanied by four others, and followed by the postulator and subpostulator of her cause.

The banner of S. Mary Frances, preceded by six Friars Minor of the Congregation of S. Peter of Alcantara (for she was a tertiary of this order), accompanied by four priests from the diocese of Naples, and followed as above.

The banner of S. Leonard of Port Maurice, preceded by six Franciscans of his reform from S. Bonaventure's Retreat, in surplice, accompanied by four in their habits, and followed by two others, who were the postulators.

The banner of S. Paul of the Cross, preceded by six Passionists in surplice, accompanied by four in their habits, and followed by two Fathers, who were the postulators.

The banner of the Martyrs of Gorcum, preceded by six priests, chosen from the different religious orders and the secular clergy to which the martyrs belonged, accompanied and followed by priests similarly chosen.

The banner of S. Peter d'Arbues, preceded by six priests of the order of Our Lady of Mercy, accompanied by four more in their habits, and followed by the postulators.

The banner of S. Josephat Kuncevic, preceded by six Basilian monks, accompanied and followed by six others, in their black Oriental flowing habits.

The seven banners were borne by various confraternities, and this part of the procession was the first to enter the church ; all who went before them remained outside. A single glance at the door of S. Peter's revealed a magnificent sight. The light of day was completely shut out, and 25,000 wax tapers, arranged in various devices, now circling the tops of the arches, now flickering in strings of glass chandeliers swung across the arches and naves, or burning in hundreds upon four gigantic candlesticks in the sanctuary, gave a delicate but adequate light to the whole basilica. There was nothing brilliant, if we except the tiara and cross-keys, which was composed of prisms of Bohemian glass, and so contrived that its outlines were marked by lights, which was suspended in mid-air in the very centre of the great nave.

The decorations of the church showed to the best advantage, the gold and silver streaks which ran down the pilasters, and the red silk hangings, the curious emblematic devices which surmounted the architrave, and the fourteen large pictures of the miracles of the saints, with various other elaborate designs around the papal throne, made S. Peter's look quite a new place. The decorations went up the cuploa, and were lost to the naked eye in its immense height. Two files of

soldiers in magnificent uniform cleared a passage amid the crowd up to the sanctuary, and there a large space was enclosed by Swiss in cuirass and helmet, which reminded one of the pictures of the 15th century. The decorations, the preparations, the immense sea of heads, with wonder, and awe, and expectation on their countenances, reaching as far as the eye could see ; everything was united in a peculiar harmony, which gave a oneness to the scene, such as you could never realize before or after.

Now the Roman Court, in all its magnificence, comes up the centre of the church ; first the lay chamberlains, in gorgeous robes of state ; next the procurators of the Pope's College, the confessor of his household, and the apostolic preacher, who is always a Capuchin friar. Chaplains bearing tiaras and mitres, whose passage was flanked by mailed Swiss, appeared now, and they were followed by other varieties of chaplains, and the papal choir, singing the *Ave Maris Stella*. The referendaries and clerks of the Signet, in purple soutannes and surplices over their rochets, appeared now, with papal clerks of the palace mingling in their ranks, and their wake was brought up by the master of the Sacred Palace, who is always a Dominican. He came in his habit, attended by a friar of his order, and his portly figure, so vested, contrasted singularly with the purple and fine linen before and behind. A few clerks, bearing the usual tiara and mitre, and a number of simple priests and noblemen, closed this part of the procession.

An acolyte of the Signet, swinging a censer, came now, and he was followed by the papal cross, borne by a subdeacon auditor of the Rota, accompanied by two

acolytes, also of the Signet. The three were attended by two masters ostiarii of the *red rod*, as they are called. The next three were the Latin sub-deacon between the Greek deacon and sub-deacon. The vestments of these latter were very splendid; they were of red lama, shining with gold and precious stones. After those came the Penitentiaries, in red chasubles, preceded by clerks bearing long wands entwined with flowers, emblems of their corrective power.

The greatest sight which the Catholic Church ever witnessed was seen next. Never, except perhaps in one of her councils, did so many bishops walk together in procession, and never was there such a thorough representation of the whole Catholic world in their pastors. About 500 venerable men, reverend for their years, their piety, and their learning, the chosen of the Church's priests, to whom the august Head of the Church had entrusted portions of His lambs and sheep; bishops and archbishops from every quarter of the globe; some whose jurisdiction was equal to that of kings, and some who swayed a paternal authority over cities and provinces, marched in solemn majesty, their countenances lit up with a consciousness of the joy which welled in their hearts, and delight that they had all but one soul and one moving principle of their lives and actions. You could do nothing but admire and venerate as you gazed with awe upon that immense army of noble champions of orthodoxy who passed by you. It was a moment in which you felt the majesty and divinity of the faith you professed, and forgot that it was possible any one could doubt of its truth. You looked at them in awe, and then thought of the choirs of glorified

spirits who assist around the throne of the Most High.

The Latin bishops were robed in red copes and plain linen mitres ; they bore a torch in the outer hand, and a chaplain walked by the side of each. The Greek bishops wore most magnificent vestments, which varied according to their different rites. Several of them had crowns set with jewels, instead of mitres, and these, with their long black hair flowing down upon their shoulders, gave them a particularly grand appearance. The bishops went in order of seniority, and this caused the Greeks to be mixed up with the Latins. It was the first time since the beginning of the Church in which Greeks and Latins were thus arranged. The Orientals are most tenacious of their rights of precedence, and never liked to mix with the Western prelates. Pius IX. altered this old custom, and his orders gave universal satisfaction when the effect of them was once seen. The bishops and archbishops were followed by the primates ; these by patriarchs. Then came the cardinal deacons, vested in red dalmatics and silk mitres ; next the cardinal priests (who are nearly all bishops) in chasuble and mitre ; and then the cardinal bishops, in copes and silk mitres. The Cardinals had three or four attendants each, and were nearly fifty in number.

After the cardinals came the senators, judges, and chief magistrates of Rome, as secular attendants on his Holiness ; they were followed by the two cardinal deacons who were to assist at the pontifical throne, and between them walked the Cardinal Deacon of the Mass. The two masters of the ceremonies came next,

and then came the grand *sedia* on which the Pope was borne, surrounded by the noble guard. His Holiness wore a red cope and a mitre, carried a torch in his left hand, and with his right blessed the multitude. Wherever he appeared, a wave of heads was rising behind and before, occasioned by their kneeling to get his blessing. The Pope was followed by several officials and another choir; the magnificent train was brought up by the prothonotaries apostolic, and some of the generals of the religious orders.

Full two hours was this procession coming around and up to the altar in S. Peter's. The abbots, bishops, and archbishops bowed to the altars, and then proceeded to their places in the apse; the cardinals turned off to the altar of the Blessed Sacrament. When the Pope appeared at the door, the silver trumpets sounded a salute, which electrified all present, and this was the signal for the choir over the door to sing the ordinary *Tu es Petrus*. When the Pope and his attendants came as far as the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament they turned off, and his Holiness knelt upon a priedieu to make a short visit. The procession immediately resumed its march, and went up into the great apse before, or, according to our notions, behind the altar.

A deep silence pervaded the multitude, which was thronged within the walls of a temple which, it is said, never was filled. On that day it was not only filled, but thronged; 25,000 priests and about 100,000 lay people, from all parts of the world, stood at that moment in the grand nave and aisles, awaiting the function which many had come several thousands of miles to witness. The Pope ascended the grand throne, which

was erected at the far end of the apse. Its rear was ornamented by golden rays, by scenes from the lives of the new saints, and other ornaments befitting the feast. Around him stood a number of cardinals and archbishops, and on seats down to the altar were ranged all the members of the Hierarchy who had come in the procession, and the old bishops and cardinals who were unequal to the fatigue.

As soon as the Pope was seated on his throne, and the attendants were ranged in their proper order, the functionary appointed knelt before him and asked for the enrolment of the *beati* in the catalogue of the saints. The Pope said that in an affair of such importance we should pray—indeed, prayers were made through Rome, and the Blessed Sacrament exposed for several weeks, in order to obtain the assistance of Heaven in the great event about to take place. At this the Pope knelt, the cardinals and bishops knelt, and a wave formed upon the surface of the congregation by their efforts to kneel in their narrow places, pushed off to the door. Two cantors, with slender, plaintive voices, intoned the Litany of the Saints. The responses were taken up by the clergy in the apse, and after a few of them were sung, you could distinguish voices chiming in, as if afraid to intrude, yet anxious to join, which gave the trembling notes a sad and petitioning character. By degrees all joined, and an *Ora pro nobis* in the mild tone of the Litanies, sung by 100,000 voices, created a strange sensation. It went through you, and made you thrill with a sort of indescribable notion that Heaven had raised up its gates to let that weird, doleful petition enter in. When the *Agnus Dei* of the Litany was

sung, such as had seats resumed them, and the petition *instantius* was made.

The Pope and the Sacred College knelt again ; and, in a clear, majestic voice, his Holiness intoned the *Veni Creator Spiritus*. The hymn was taken up by all present, and this time the chant was bolder, but it was still plaintive, from the very nature of the music. At its conclusion, two beautiful voices from the choir sung the *Emitte Spiritum tuum*, the Pope sung the prayer *Deus qui corda fidelium*, and those who could sat again. The third petition, *instantissime*, was now made and granted.

The Pope sat now formally *in cathedra*. This solemn position is the most famous in all theology and history, for it is there he speaks infallibly. The chair was placed upon an elevated throne, and a well-regulated combination of colours gave it due prominence. At the right and left of the Holy Father stood the attendant cardinals, on the steps were some bishops, and the whole of the Sacred College and episcopate stood with heads bowed and uncovered, and so did all the faithful children then present, to listen with respect and attention to the infallible voice. The mitre was placed upon the Pontiff's head, a book was put before him, and in an authoritative impressive tone, he uttered this decree :—

“ Ad honorem Sanctæ et individuae Trinitatis, ad exaltationem Fidei Catholicæ, et Christianæ religionis augmentum, auctoritate Domini nostri Jesu Christi, beatorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, ac Nostra ; matura deliberatione præhabita, et divina ope sæpius implorato, ac de venerabilium fratrum nostrorum Sanctiæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ Cardinalium, Patriarchorum,

Archiepiscoporum, Episcoporum, in urbe existentium consilio, beatos Josaphat Kunceвич, Pontificem; Petrum de Arbues, Nicolaum Pichi, cum sociis, videlicet, Hieronymum Theodoricum, Nicasium Joannem, Willehadum, Godefridum Mervellanum, Antonium Werdanum, Antonium Hornaniensem, Franciscum, Joannem, Adrianum, Joannem Ostervicanum, Leonardum, Nicolaum, Godefridum, Duneum, et Andream, sacerdotes; Petrum et Cornelium, liacos, omnes Martyres; Paulum a Cruce et Leonardum a Portu Mauritio, confessores; Franciscam et Germanam, virgines; Sanctos esse discernimus, et definimus, ac Sanctorum catalogo adscribimus: Statuentes ab Ecclesia universali eorum memoriam quolibet anno, nempe Josaphat, die duodecima Novembris; Petri, die decima septima Septembris; Nicolai et sociorum ejus, die nona Julii, inter Sanctos Martyres; Pauli, die vigesima octava Aprilis; Leonardi, die vigesima sexta Novembris, inter Sanctos Confessores non Pontifices; Mariæ Francescæ, die sexta Octobris; Germanæ, die decima quinta Junii, inter Sanctas Virgines, pia devotione recolere debere. In nomine Pa^{tr}is, et Fi^{li}i, et Spiritus^Sancti. Amen."

At a quarter to ten o'clock this decree was pronounced; when it was over, the Pope stood up, and, in his most majestic tone, sung *Te Deum laudamus*. The whole people joined in, and a voice like the roar of many waters, winds, and shrill organs, ascended into heaven. The cannons began to boom from Fort Saint Angelo, the bells of Rome began to ring, the telegraph wires were set in motion—an ecstatic feeling pervaded every member of the immense multitude—their voice seemed to gain new strength at each alternate verse of the

grand Ambrosian hymn—one looked at the other as if transported with delight—the exultation seemed to raise them on high—one forgot earth altogether, and it seemed as if Heaven had lent them its inspiration for a moment. Every one seemed inclined to catch a chair or a something to keep the joy of his soul from running away with his body. *In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum.*

The chorus of cannons, bells, and human voices was subdued a little when a wave passing over the sea of heads denoted the reverence at the *Te ergo quæsumus*. When we stood again, we put our whole souls into our verses, and our enthusiasm grew grander and more expressive as each succeeding verse embodied our emotions. It was then, if ever, one felt that he praised God with his whole soul. When the hymn was finished, you could hear the clang of the bells, and the peals of the guns, as if they carried on outside the concert which had just terminated within. This noise affected us the more as all were hushed into silence, awaiting the next change in the grand ceremonial. There was a pause, as if we should all take breath and realize the fact that we were still mortal. At that moment the news of the Canonization had gone over the world, and in many towns priests were vested and tapers lighted awaiting to intone their *Te Deum* and ring their bells when the telegraph brought them the news. This was especially the case in Ovada, the birthplace of S. Paul of the Cross. So that the note given at S. Peter's went forth immediately to the ends of the earth—*Et in fines orbis terræ verba eorum.*

A procession was now formed, and the Pope came to

the second or inferior throne, which was on the Epistle side, between the grand throne and the altar, and there, attended by his ministers, he intoned *Tierce*. As soon as the *Legem pone mihi Domine* was sung, he sat down and was vested for the High Mass. Seven torches and a cross were held around him whilst vesting.

At half-past ten o'clock his Holiness was at the foot of the altar, commencing Mass, with a whole crowd of attendants, cardinals, primates, and archbishops—none inferior—Latin and Greek, who were not missed from the great numbers in the stalls. The Mass went on like that said by an ordinary bishop until the *Introit*. Then the Pope went in procession to the grand throne, where he said the *Kyrie* and intoned the *Gloria*. He sung a double collect, that of SS. Peter and Paul, and that of the newly-canonized, *sub unica conclusione*. The Epistle and Gospel were sung first in Latin and then in Greek, and after the Gospel the Pope delivered a homily adapted to the Centenary of S. Peter and the Canonization. Few heard him ; but, judging from what we saw of it in the Roman papers next day, it was a very fine oration indeed.

About this time a master of ceremonies called out the postulators to prepare their offerings. The offerings lay on seven tables, and consisted of one large wax candle, weighing forty-five pounds, and four smaller ones, of twelve pounds each—they were beautifully decorated, and had a portrait of the saint for which they were to be offered painted on them—two loaves, one gilt and the other silvered, two little barrels similarly decorated, three cages, containing—one, two pigeons, one two turtle doves, and the third little birds of various

species. There was a table for each saint, similarly loaded, and one for the nineteen martyrs of Gorcum.

When the holy Father said the offertory, the masters of ceremonies organized the processions for the offerings. They proceeded in the following order : First, two mace-bearers and a cardinal ; then two gentlemen, robed in antique and gorgeous costume, accompanying each priest belonging to a saint, who carried a candle or a cage ; then two other cardinals, accompanied by nobles ; and, lastly, other dignitaries and priests of the Roman court, bearing the loaves and barrels. There were seven bodies of this description, who went slowly up the long apse on one side, and, after presenting their gifts, returned on the other. There was about ten yards' distance between each body.

Whilst all were contemplating this picturesque array, their attention was arrested by a burst of music from the orchestra just over the sanctuary. If all the powerful organs in the country let out their full swell in harmonious concert, they could not have produced a sound equal to that which issued from one hundred human voices unassisted by any instrument whatever. The piece performed was altogether new. It was a *Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram*, etc. The choir seemed all a great bass, and yet you could distinctly hear four voices harmonizing ; but the music had such a body of sound in it, that the very roof of S. Peter's seemed to tremble as bar after bar pealed forth grander and grander each time. All were petrified and ravished ; every eye was turned to the orchestra, and solemn cardinals stopped in their ceremonial march to look and listen. When the attention was riveted for about five minutes on

the sanctuary choir, a burst from over the door called it off. This was another choir of one hundred voices, in which tenors predominated. It sung a glorious melody, more delicate and sonorous than that of the first choir; and as its silvery tones died away in the farthest corner of the basilica, the first choir commenced again. They alternated for some five minutes, and then they both joined in a thrilling exalting chorus. This was just hanging on its last notes, when a warbling of little voices, like birds of Paradise, set up a beautiful angelic symphony in the cupola. This delicious song proceeded from a choir of two hundred children. Few could tell where this new and extraordinary sound came from; all seemed bewildered with delight. The three choirs then answered each other for some time, and the heavy choir sung bass to the children, and the tenor choir chimed in. Then the three shouted with all the might of art and training, first severally, and then collectively, *Non prævalebunt*. The thought of confidence suggested by this, and the evidence of such confidence one saw there before him, seemed too large for a human mind. Tears ran down the cheeks of aged prelates and priests; and one old man, who had witnessed several canonizations, was heard to say to his neighbour, "*Che sara Paradiso?*"—"What will heaven be?" This grand piece of music was quite new. The soul of it was to represent the Church in its three states,—militant, suffering, and triumphant. This spirit ran through the various parts of the composition, and when the three choirs united at last for a grand finale, far more jubilant than Handel's Hallelujah Chorus, the effect was surprising beyond conception. This stroke was meant to

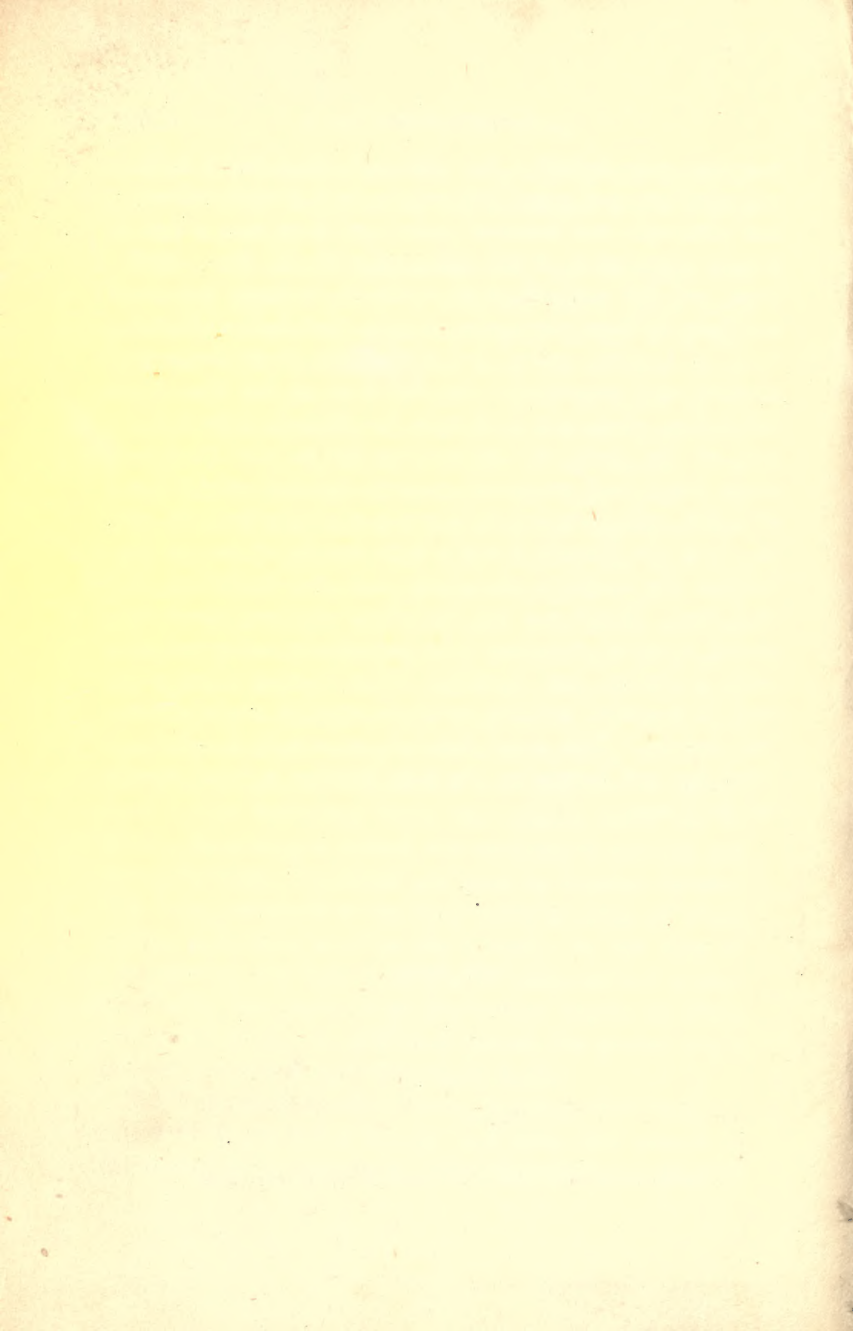
express the union of all the members of the mystical body of Christ exulting on the centenary of the Prince of the Apostles.

When the music was over, and the offerings had been laid again, but in a different order, upon their tables, the Pope came processionally to the altar and went on with the Mass. He sung the Preface splendidly, and his grand clear voice could be heard in the piazza. The approach to the Elevation was announced by a blast from the silver trumpets in the cupola. The noble guard who stood around the altar drew their swords, knelt on one knee, put their left hands to their helmets, and stretched out their swords flat upon the ground. This is their grandest military salute. The effect was striking. All knelt now who could, and the trumpets blew an angelic flow of the sweetest notes until the Elevation was over. The Pope elevates the Host and Chalice towards the four quarters of the globe, and turns round whilst doing so to make a circle somewhat like a priest giving benediction with the Blessed Sacrament. The Elevation over, the guards stood up as before, the trumpets ceased, cannonading was heard, and the choir sung *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*. The Pope remained at the altar until he sung the *Pater Noster*, and then went to the throne. At the time of Communion, the Host and Chalice were carried in procession by the cardinals to the throne, where the Pope consumed them. As our Lord passed, the guards made their grand salute, and the people knelt.

The Pope came to the altar again for the last blessing, which he gives like a bishop, and after this retired to the throne to be unvested. This concluded the greatest

function ever beheld ; for, although there have been canonizations and papal high masses in S. Peter's before, and although two hundred years ago there was a centenary celebration of the martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul, yet the assemblage of cardinals, bishops, priests, and laity in Rome was never so great, and the manifestations of loyalty, unity, and Catholicity were never so striking and unanimous. In the days of the Church's difficulties, when men look upon the Papacy as doomed, and on the piety of Christendom as on the wane,—when kings and emperors conspire against the Vicar of Christ, and try to lay their iron grasp upon the noblest rights of the Church, it was a sight worthy of heaven to witness the majesty, the glory, and the exultation of that day. Never was the Church so glorious, never so grand, never so victorious ; for her victory and grandeur were heavenly, not earthly. After having witnessed such a function, nothing seems worthy of one's notice but heaven. This grand function gave us the right of invoking and honouring our holy founder as Saint Paul of the Cross.

THE END.



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Pius a Spiritu Sancto,
father.

The life of S. Paul of
the Cross, founder of
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